RP inflation rate lowest in 22 years—NSO

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE RATE OF INCREASE OF CONSUMER prices in August still reached levels not seen in 22 years, remaining on track to hit official targets for the year, according to the National Statistics Office.

The NSO said that inflation in August barely rose at 0.2 percent from the same month last year.

The annual rise in consumer prices for the month was slower than the 0.2-percent increase seen in July.

INFLATION A10

NEWS / A8

2 more long weekends coming

NEWS / A3

Ka Erdy interment set Sept. 7

ACROSS / A17

NPAs back anticoal mining fight

METRO / A21

Ruby Rose pa-in-law yields; 5 others wanted

SPORTS / A25

RP pug Suarez masters Romanian in world championships

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Saturday, September 5, 2009 ★★ 10 sections / Vol. 24 / No. 249 P18

Noodle house in hot water over 'glass tofu'

By Nina Catherine Calleja

AND YOU THOUGHT finding a fly in your soup was disgusting.

A popular noodle house is in hot water after serving a plate of tofu with a

NOODLE A19

TEODORO: Tremendous political boost

49 governors back Teodoro's Palace bid

By Michael Lim Ubac

FORTY-NINE PROVINCIAL GOVernors yesterday backed the presidential candidacy of Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, in a move a Palace official described as a "very compelling endorsement" of Teodoro's bid to become the administration's standard bearer in 2010.

The governors took the action at the general assembly of the League of Provinces of the Philippines (LPP) at the Discovery Suites in Pasig city, party officials said.

While Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Evardone was presiding over the assembly, Sarangani Gov. Miguel Dominguez suddenly stood up and moved to endorse Teodoro as the standard bearer of the administration coalition for next year's elections.

Except for a lone voice, Negros Oriental Gov. Emilio Macias II, the 49 other governors present seconded the motion, according to party officials the bag-ina had talked with.

"It's a breath of fresh air to be endorsed and supported by the governors," Teodoro said in a statement to the Inquirer. "With this endorsement, I feel a tremendous boost. They believe in my candidacy and that motivates a lot amid the confusion."

It was not immediately clear how the governors' action would square with President Macapagal-Arroyo's statement last week that she considered Vice President Noli de Castro, another potential presidential aspirant, to have the qualities of a "good president."

That statement was seen in some quarters as a presidential endorsement of De Castro.

Macias explained he could not go along the motion to en-

GOVERNORS A19

Cebu rapist going to Spain

DOJ okays Larrañaga transfer to Spanish jail

By Norman Bordadora in Manila and Jhannex Napallacan in Cebu City

CONVICTED Paco Larrañaga, in leg chains, steps down from a bus on arrival at the New Bilibid Prison from Cebu City on May 12, 1999. He was 21 years old then.

UNKNOWN TO MANY, the Department of Justice has approved the transfer of convict Francisco Juan "Paco" Larrañaga to a penal facility in Spain to serve the remainder of his life sentence for the rape and murder of the Chiong sisters in Cebu in 1997.

Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera said it would only be "a matter of time" for Larrañaga, a scion of Cebu's Osmeña clan and a citizen of Spain by virtue of his father, to be transferred to a Spanish prison under the RP-Spain Transfer of Sentenced Persons Agreement.

Larrañaga, now 32, and six others were convicted of kidnapping, illegal detention, rape and homicide in connection with the abduction, rape and death of the sisters Jacqueline and Marjory Chiong. (See What Went Before on Page A10.)

"He will be sent home to be incarcerated there," Devanadera told the Inquirer after confirming the DOJ approval of the request for Larrañaga's transfer.

"This is just a matter of time," she said, and replied in the affirmative when asked if the convict would be in Spain before the year ends.

DOJ A10

JACQUELINE CHIONG Older sister; her body was never recovered.

MARJORY CHIONG Body found two days after abduction.

Malacañang to Chavit: Behave, be upright

By TJ Burgonio and Nancy C. Carvajal

SINGSON gestures during an interview with the Inquirer.

ALL MALACAÑANG COULD tell its deputy national security adviser, Luis "Chavit" Singson, who is under fire for assaulting his former live-in partner, was to "behave."

"We advise Undersecretary Singson to behave accordingly as an upright citizen and to submit himself to due process of law," Press Secretary Cerge Remonde told reporters yesterday at a briefing.

The Palace stopped short of censuring Singson, who had been quiet in his job as deputy to National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales until news broke on Wednesday that Rachel "Cha" Thorgson, the mother of five of his children, had filed a criminal complaint accusing him of beating her on Aug. 22.

In answer to a question, Remonde indicated that Singson's fate in the government would

MALACAÑANG A14

THOMPSON fears for her life, her family's safety and boyfriend.

Lacson vows to 'tell all' on Dacer slay in Senate

By Christine Avendaño

SEN. PANFILO LACSON WILL "tell all" he knows about the murder of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito, in which he has been implicated—but in the privileged and intimate confines of the Senate.

Lacson, who has always insisted that he had nothing to do with the killing of Dacer, yesterday said he would disclose what he has found out about the murders "from my own investigation."

The former national police chief said he conducted his own

LACSON VOWS A14

P3-B ethanol plant in Negros is Southeast Asia's 1st

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

SAN CARLOS CITY, NEGROS OCCIdental—Southeast Asia's first sugarcane-based ethanol and co-generation plant, which was inaugurated here yesterday, will help wean the Philippines away from dependence on fossil fuels, officials said.

The P3-billion San Carlos Bioenergy Inc. (SCBI) facility will produce nearly 40 million liters of ethanol annually, representing about 10 percent of the nation's requirements, as mandated by the Biofuels Act of 2006.

"This is a major milestone in the government's effort to reduce dependency on imported sources of energy and to have energy security coupled with social equity and environmental sustainability," said Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes, who led government officials at the inauguration ceremonies yesterday.

"We should have 20 more replications of this plant all over the Philippines," he said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, who was scheduled to inaugurate the plant, could not make it because the "weather did not permit it," Reyes said.

But through Reyes, Ms Arroyo said that the plant was the realization of her dream to make the Philippines less de-

PLANT TAMMED A14

THE NEWLY opened San Carlos BioEnergy Inc. bioethanol plant in San Carlos City, Negros Occidental, has a production capacity of 40 million liters of ethanol annually.

Jackson late for his own funeral

GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA—Michael Jackson was laid to rest Thursday night in a glistening gold coffin adorned with a bejeweled crown, after family and friends saluted him in a poignant farewell.

More than two months after he died of a drug overdose, the tragic King of Pop was mourned by celebrities including Elizabeth Taylor, Barry Bonds, and Jackson's ex-wife Lisa Marie Presley, daughter of Elvis Presley, at a private service outside the elaborate Forest Lawn Glendale mausoleum.

Unpredictable to the last, Jackson was late for his own funeral—his private casket set down before mourners nearly two hours after the service had been scheduled to start at 7 p.m. local time.

JACKSON A9

WEATHER FORECAST

Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Kalibo	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Rains
Metro Manila	Rains	Iloilo	Cloudy with Rains
Legaspi	Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Tabaco	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Second FRONTPAGE

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Noynoy: No decision date yet

By John Aliparo
Inquirer Mindanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—SENATOR Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III prefers a historic date for a historic decision he will make.

It is more close to the Aquino family said yesterday that Aquino would announce his decision on whether or not to run for president or next year's election on either of two historical days in the country's history.

The source, who requested anonymity for lack of authority to speak on the matter, said Aquino had told him and other close associates that his plans to announce his decision "either on Sept. 11 or Sept. 21."

Former president Ferdinand Marcos was born on the 11th of Sept. He declared martial law, which led to the arrests of prominent opposition figures—including his father, the former senator Benigno Aquino Jr.—on Sept. 21.

Arriving from Davao

It was not clear why Aquino had chosen said dates.

Aquino arrived here from a consultation with his late mother's supporters in Davao City including Mayor Rodrigo Duterte and businessman Jesus Ayala, on Thursday afternoon.

He admitted his supporters there wanted him to run.

Upon arrival here, he was welcomed by local politicians led by Mayor Celso Lobregat.

Task Force Zamboanga commander Col. Santiago Baleyra, a member of former president Corazon Aquino's clique in security, told Aquino "had a very busy schedule on Thursday."

What a brief response at the Garden Orchid Hotel, where he was billeted, Aquino proceeded to a local television station for an interview. He was accompanied by Lobregat and several city councilors.

Aquino had dinner with the same entourage at the Alavar Seafoods House and was joined by Lobregat at Port Pilar.

Baleyra said Aquino spent a few minutes praying while at the first.

Baleyra said people started flocking to the shrine where they learned that Aquino was there.

He then proceeded to Paseo del Mar, near the Lantaka Hotel, for another photo opportunity with the local press and more supporters.

Baleyra said Aquino arrived at his hotel at around 10 p.m.

Yesterday morning, he visited Archbishop Romulo Valles before proceeding to the Cornelius Resort' resource a few blocks away to see Sister Agnes Guillen.

Guillen was his mother's spiritual advisor and is very close to the Aquino siblings. The initial meeting lasted for about three hours.

Aquino also admitted being surprised by Pampanga Gov. Ed Panlilio's withdrawal from the presidential race so he can support Aquino.

Overwhelmed

"Actually I hardly mention names, I am overwhelmed with these developments and if I have time, I will try to see him (Panlilio)," Aquino said.

Aquino said his seven hours of talks with Sister Agnes had enlightened him on what to do and how to confront "some issues," adding he did not specify.

"The lessons live here, when I wake up this morning, there seemed to be a lot of questions bothering me before coming here and now although it's not really that bright here...it's a big importance. From this morning, when I met Sister Agnes," he said in Filipino before leaving the Carmelite convent.

When pressed to elaborate, Aquino said, "This morning, there were a lot of voices, telling me this and that and it has become tiring. And it seemed it could not be settled when I woke up this morning. Now after coming here, it has been placed in the proper perspective," he said.

He confirmed that he would soon announce his decision but declined to confirm the date. With a report from Tj Burgonio

LAKBAY Again for now Noynoy Aquino—supporters John Bacod, Gov. Ed Panlilio and Sen. Francis Pangilinan. (photo)

It's official: Among Ed is out

By DJ Yap

FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF Sen. Mar Roxas II, Pampanga Gov. Eddie Panlilio announced yesterday he was dropping his plan to run for president to give way to Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III.

Panlilio, a Catholic priest, formally announced his bid for the presidency and declared he is backing Aquino, the only son of their opposition leader late Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. and the late former President Corazon Aquino.

"We have decided to renounce our bid to run for [elected] and to award give our wholehearted support and trust to Sen. Benigno 'Noynoy' Aquino III," he said in a prepared statement in Filipino.

The statement was a joint one with Isabela Gov. Grace Padaca, who could not make it to the press conference at Club Filipino in San Juan City Friday.

Panlilio said he reached his decision after a series of consultations with Aquino, his colleagues in the good governance and ethical movement Kaya Kaela and supporters in Pampanga and other parts of the country.

"If Sen. Mar Roxas could sacrifice all he had done for his candidacy, it should be easier for all of us to also give way for the sake of our beloved country," Panlilio said.

He called on other aspiring presidential candidates and political parties to make the same sacrifice and rally behind Aquino.

During the open forum, he clarified that for the time being, he was supporting Aquino only, and not necessarily an Aquino-Roxas tandem.

As to his own political plans, Panlilio said he was considering three options: running for re-election, seeking higher office or returning to the priesthood. "But definitely I'm not seeking the vice presidency," he said.

With Panlilio's withdrawal from the race, Sen. Francis Pangilinan, who was at the press conference, said the support for an Aquino-Roxas tandem had started to gain ground.

"I think we're reaching that level of groundswell," he told the reporters.

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No single person can save us—Meloto

By Jillian W. Lopez

GAWAD KALINGA FOUNDER TONY MELOTO considers it a "tragedy" that Filipinos continue to look to a savior to rebuild the country.

Ordinary Filipinos, and not one single person, will save the country from further deterioration, said Meloto, who spoke at the launch on Monday of his book, "Builder of Dreams," which he has dedicated to former President Corazon Aquino and Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino Jr.

Meloto was talking in the context of who could carry on the legacy of Cory and Ninoy and the growing movement for the presidential candidacy of their son, Sen. Noynoy Aquino, as being the only one who can unite the country the way he parents did.

But Filipinos should also look at themselves as nation builders, said the Ramon Magsaysay awardee for community leadership.

He said it was tragic that Filipinos are "always looking for somebody to pin all our hopes on and also to blame when these hopes are not realized."

"We don't have to look for that one leader to bring our nation to glory. It's important for us to see that every Filipino can love this country as much... because there's only one Cory and one Ninoy in our lifetime. For there are millions of us within this lifetime who can love this country as much as they did," he said.

Though he recognized that Noynoy has "lived his life with integrity," Meloto declined to say outright if he would support the expected presidential bid of Noynoy, who was at the launch to speak on behalf of his parents.

"As far as partisan politics is concerned, we have made it our philosophy to work with everyone. Not to judge politicians but to engage them according to our values. Right now, we believe there is a golden opportunity to build on the legacy of Ninoy and Cory. We should believe there is a Cory and Ninoy in all of us," Meloto said.

This emerging Filipino spirit of volunteerism, how Filipinos here and abroad can work together to reduce poverty is featured in his 451-page book, he said.

"Despite the gloom and doom of the global recession and whatever local political issues that tend to divide our people, there is a growing army of Filipinos all over the world who are starting to dream that dream together," he said.

Chiz says no to Villar teamup

NO THANK YOU.

Opposition Sen. Francis "Chiz" Escudero yesterday rejected a tentative offer from Sen. Manny Villar in the wake of the latest survey by Social Weather Stations which showed a likely win for a Villar-Escudero candidacy if presidential elections were held today.

"Impossible. It will never happen. I stand for good governance," the 39-year-old lawmaker said in a press statement.

"Given what I have seen and read about the allegations raised in the C-5 controversy, it seems to be just the tip of the iceberg. I cannot in good conscience run with or under him," said Escudero. The former Senate president is currently facing an ethics investigation by the Senate committee of the whole for the alleged diversion of the C-5 road project to benefit Villar's real estate company.

Villar has denied the allegations raised by Sen. Jinggoy Estrada in October last year and has refused to attend the Senate hearings.

Instead, the billionaire senator responded to the charges in the media in an aggressive campaign to counter the charges, claiming that the allegations are meant to undermine his bid for the presidency.

"If the charges are false, then there is still time for Senator Villar to personal his side before his peers in the Senate," Escudero said.

NBN-ZTE SCANDAL

Charge Mike A, Ombudsman urged

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN has been asked to reconsider its resolution absolving Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo, of any liability in the $329-million NBN-ZTE deal, saying there was sufficient evidence to implicate him in the unsolicited transaction.

In a motion for reconsideration filed yesterday, whistleblower Rodolfo "Jun" Lozada and Akbayan party-list Rep. Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel said Lozada's statement about the deal during a Senate inquiry also cited by the Office of the Ombudsman's resolution "contemplates an eyewitness account of respondent (Mike) Arroyo's involvement in the ZTE project."

The Office of the Ombudsman earlier cleared the President and her husband of allegations they were involved in bartering the National Broadband Network (NBN) deal with China's ZTE Corp.

Charged

However, it recommended the filing of charges against former Commissioner on Elections (Comelec) chair Benjamin Abalos and Social Security System president Romulo Neri. Both Abalos and Neri have appealed the findings.

A motion filed in the Office of the Ombudsman on Wednesday by the Concerned Citizens Movement (CCM) led by former vice president Teofisto Guingona, also said Ms Arroyo and her husband should not have been spared.

Lozada had testified he heard Abalos on the phone talking about the deal with Mike Arroyo.

ABALOS

LOZADA

He added that the President's husband even joined him and witness Joey De Venecia III at a dinner Abalos had organized.

"At the very least, strongly, if indirectly, implies that respondent (Mike) Arroyo, as the behest of respondents Abalos, intervened in the process of awarding the ZTE contract," Baraquel said.

Lawyer Ernesto Francisco Jr., another complainant, said that based on the evidence presented by the others, Mike Arroyo should face not only graft charges but other charges for violating the Code of Conduct for relatives of the President.

"The truth of the matter is that contrary to the ilustrable Officer's finding, convincing and solid evidence which directly or indirectly link respondent Arroyo to the controversial NBN-ZTE Project have been unfortunately presented," he said.

Francisco also lamented that the Office of the Ombudsman "miserably, if not deliberately, failed to investigate Ms Arroyo and Mike Arroyo's trip to China to meet with ZTE officials."

The Office of the Ombudsman said earlier that the President was immune from suit, and that there was insufficient evidence against her husband.

But the CCM said allegations against Ms Arroyo are criminal in nature, and therefore not covered by presidential immunity. "These actions cannot be considered as official acts of the President because they are illegal," it added.

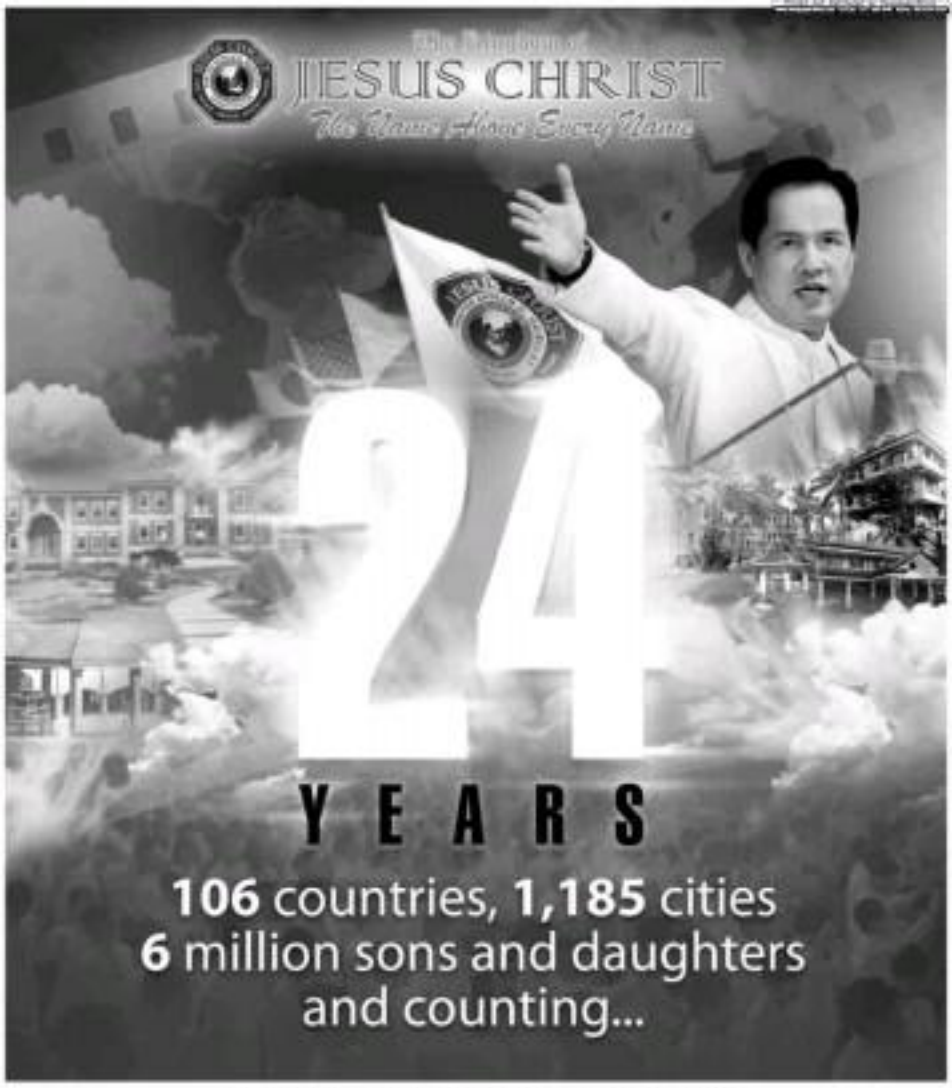
Ka Erdy interment on Monday

KA EDDIE VILLANUEVA (INC) spokesperson Bienvenido C. Santiago has announced that the remains of INC leader Bro. "Ka Erdy" Manalo will be temporarily laid to rest on Sept. 7, 12 noon at the Tabernacle inside the compound of the INC Central Office on Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City.

His body will remain at the Tabernacle, which is just a few steps away from the Central Temple where Manalo now lies in state, until the completion of his mausoleum.

Manalo will be entombed beside the mausoleum of his father Felix Y. Manalo in San Juan City.

Arlyn dela Cruz



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I have nothing to hide, says Dato Arroyo

By Jose Escandor Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUMAVAO, CAMARINES SUR—"I HIDE nothing to hide. All our properties are listed in the SAL (statement of assets and liabilities)," said Rep. Diosdado Ignacio "Dato" Arroyo, in setting to a severely publicized story which questioned how he and brother Aun. Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo acquired homes in California.

Arroyo is representative of the 1st district of Camarines Sur. He and brother Mikey Arroyo are the eldest sons of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

While Arroyo did not elaborate how he was able to afford the US property, he did say he bought the California condominiums when the US economy was in recession.

"It was a good time to invest because properties prices were going down. I borrowed money from my father-in-law," Arroyo explained.

He said it was his father-in-law, Budlao Lim Mercado, who is senior managing director and chief financial officer of Iquita Corp., who first bought properties in the United States. This gave him the idea to also invest in US property.

Doing his job

"I don't see why they would think there is any irregularity. Anybody can examine the SAL and all our properties are [listed] there," Arroyo said.

Celebrating his 35th birthday one day in advance last Thursday, he said he had no idea why people were "making an issue about his properties."

He said he was doing his job as representative by delivering services to his constituents.

He has pledged to deliver "Tulay, Kalsada, Operasyong Tuwid, trade and job opportunities" or TKO.

On his 34th birthday last year, his mother, President Arroyo, announced more than P5-billion projects for the first district of Camarines Sur.

The single biggest project is the P1.9-billion dam project that will benefit Libmanan, Camaligan but, the adopted residence of Arroyo since he built his house in Barangay Pinit here in 2006.

The dam will provide irrigation to some 4,000 hectares of rice lands in the towns of Libmanan and Cabusao, all in the first district of Camarines Sur. The National Irrigation Administration (NIA) estimates that some 3,000 farmers will benefit from the project.

Bill to plug loopholes in antigraft law

By Michael Lim Ubac

NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS ON UNREPORTED assets allegedly acquired by Ompong Rep. Aun Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, a son of President Macapagal-Arroyo, prompted a senator to push for the early passage of a bill requiring all public officials and other government employees to sign a waiver allowing the Office of the Ombudsman and other concerned agencies to look into their bank deposits and investments.

Senate Bill No. 1470, which is pending at the committee level, also puts in place a mechanism that will allow the government to audit the finances of civil servants, according to Sen. Francis "Chiz" Escudero, chair of the Senate committee on justice and human rights.

"This will plug loopholes in our antigraft laws and discourage thieves from plying their trade in the corridors of power," said Escudero. "If passed into law, no government official or employee can hide behind the cloak of bank secrecy laws to protect their ill-gotten wealth."

Asked if this would mean even the young Arroyo, Escudero said: "All those required to file a Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN) are covered because, in my bill, the waiver is incorporated in the SALN to be filed."

Arroyo has been under the anomaly after reports came out about his ballooning net worth and disclosure of a P63.7-million beachfront property in the United States. From a net worth of P5 million stated in his SALN filed in 2002, the amount jumped to P89 million last year.

The compromises said later that the 2002 SALN was inaccurate and had been corrected the following year.

And although he acknowledged that he owned property at 1655 Beach Park Boulevard in Foster City, San Mateo County, in California's San Francisco Bay Area, Arroyo said it belonged to a company called Beach Bay Park LLC (Limited Liability Company) of which he and his family owned 40 percent in shares.

Escudero said the pending measure was aimed at maintaining honesty and integrity in the public service by requiring government employees to be open and transparent in all their financial transactions and dealings.

The bill covers all public officials and employees, except those who serve in an honorary capacity, laborers and casual or temporary workers.

It requires yearly submission of a waiver in favor of the Ombudsman, the Anti-Money Laundering Council and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and would allow these officials to obtain from all financial institutions, public or private, domestic or overseas, all information and documents on the financial assets, deposits, investments in bonds and securities of civil servants.

'Labuyo' racing toward northern Luzon

TROPICAL STORM ST. LUCIA (international name: Labuyo) is expected to enter the Philippine area of responsibility this afternoon or tomorrow morning, the state weather bureau said.

Labuyo was located 770 kilometers east of Virac, Catanduanes, at 10 a.m. today, the state weather bureau said.

It was moving west northwestward at 15 kph and packing maximum winds of 85 kph near the center and gustiness of up to 100 kph, the bureau said.

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NEW FIGHT FOR THE CHAMP

Pacquiao to climb political ring anew

BOXING HERO MANNY PACquiao declared yesterday he was determined to win for Congress some year despite a previous election defeat and a looming bout with three-time world champion Miguel Cotto.

Pacquiao, popularly known as "Pacman," told reporters he had enough time to train for his fight against Cotto in November and then campaign for a seat in the House of Representatives, with national elections slated for May next year.

"My [re-election campaign] will still push through. Nothing has changed," said Pacquiao, who has set up his own party, the People's Champ Movement.

Pacquiao said he had enough time for the Cotto fight despite numerous opportunities to accumulate, television shows and even an upcoming movie.

"I will start my training next week. I count the days. I need at least eight weeks of training before a fight," he said.

"Como cannot be underestimated. He is big, strong and he is a good boxer and he has shown when he can do it in the ring. We can't take him lightly," said Pacquiao, widely regarded as the best pound-for-pound boxer in the world.

"I will need discipline and training. I will need to be serious and study his style," he said.

Pacquiao, who turns 31 this year, made the comments even as he accepted another extension commitment—this one a promotion in the military reserves.

At the Army headquarters in Manila, Pacquiao, who was already a senior master sergeant in an army reserve division, was named a sergeant major.

The ceremony was attended by Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro and Armed Forces chief Gen. Victor Ibrado.

"I feel inspired and I am thankful for my promotions because now I can help more people," said Pacquiao, dressed in military fatigues.

Ibrado said Pacquiao's appointment was not merely ceremonial. "He will have actual duties as a sergeant major," he told AFP.

"It depends on, whether he is available. Even if he is elected, he can still be a reservist," the general said.

Pacquiao's victories over such formidable opponents as Ricky Hatton, Juan Manuel Marquez, David Diaz and Oscar de la Hoya have made him one of the Philippines' most popular personalities.

But he lost in Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro (L) to General Statistics in his first bid for Congress in 2007, but this time he will be seeking a seat in Sarangani, his wife's province.

Political observers said many liked him but did not want Pacquiao's attendees diverted away from the boxing ring. AFP

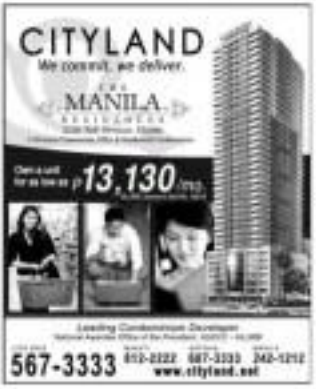
MANNY PACQUIAO receives his promotion from Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro and AFP chief Gen. Victor Ibrado. —

King Baybay; 72

DR. FRANCISCO BUSTA "KING" Baybay of Sta. Rosa, Laguna died on Thursday, Sept. 3. He was 72.

He is survived by wife Myrna; children: Frances Mia, Teresa, Francisco Jr., and Ferdinand Charles; grandchild Alexandria Mia Reyes; and siblings Hector, Isolino, Nellie, Boris and Aileen.

The body now lies at the family residence in Sta. Rosa. Interment has been tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 9, at the Sta. Rosa cemetery following a requiem Mass at the St. Nicholas Church in Calauan.



Charges filed vs 37 in gun smuggle

THE BUREAU OF Customs has filed a complaint before the Department of Justice against 37 persons in connection with the alleged smuggling of more than 19 million rounds of high-powered rifles in the cubicles of Mayor Jaime Bautista, Bataan, in August.

Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales called on Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera yesterday as he led customs officials in filing the bureau's complaint against the respondents including the owners of the vessels involved in the illegal shipment.

Among those facing charges for violation of the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines are British nationals Dave Smith and Derek Neville. Smith is the owner while Neville is the captain of the yacht MY Moo Mar Tri.

Also charged is Eddy Sydney, said to be the president of La Plata Corp. that owns the vessel Mv Ubi.

"This is a case of national significance. It's not only a case of smuggled goods but it is a case of smuggled guns and ammunition," Devanadera said.

2 more long weekends coming

HERE COME TWO MORE LONG weekends.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday declared Sept. 7 and Sept. 21 as nonworking holidays throughout the country.

Ms. Arroyo declared Monday next week a national day of mourning for the late Iglesia ni Cristo Executive Minister Eraño "Ka Erdy" Manalo, who will be buried that day, Press Secretary Cerge Remonde said last night.

"All flags will be flown at half mast," he said in a text message to reporters.

On Sept. 21, Muslim Filipinos will be marking Eid'l Fitr, or the end of the holy month of Ramadan.

After paying her last respects to the late INC leader, Ms. Arroyo on Wednesday night issued Proclamation No. 1879 declaring a period of national prayer for Manalo "effective immediately until the day of interment."

Malacañang earlier declared July 27 as a special national working holiday in view of the founding anniversary of INC.

Oslo talks stalled; gov't, NDF blame each other

LONG-AWAITED TALKS IN NORWAY THIS weekend between the Philippine government and Maoist rebels aimed at ending a deadly 40-year insurgency will not go ahead, both sides said yesterday.

The setback came as authorities announced they had arrested a senior communist leader in charge of rebel operations in southern Luzon, prematurely fueling tension between the adversaries.

The meeting, due to start in Oslo on Saturday, was to be the first time in four years that the two sides had formally sat down in an effort to broker a deal to end the longdimmering conflict, which has claimed thousands of lives.

Both sides blamed each other for the displacement of hundreds.

"Talks would not go ahead because the National Democratic Front (NDF) 'failed to respond' to the government's call to resolve outstanding issues ahead of the negotiations, a government spokesperson told AFP.

Consultants

Spokesperson Rey Cal said the NDF, which represents the Communist Party of the Philippines and its 9,200-member armed wing, had insisted the government dismiss criminal charges against certain rebel leaders and release other from jail.

The government has already freed two jailed rebel leaders—but the NDF has insisted on "reconfiguration" as the peace talks, but refused to drop criminal charges against them and other rebel leaders who remain at large.

The government insisted lawyers representing the NDF to be listed talks in Manila this week to try to resolve some of the outstanding issues ahead of the Oslo negotiations, but Cal said they did not show up.

However, the NDF accused President Macapagal-Arroyo and her cautioned security advisory of "preventing the resumption of the formal talks."

NDF spokesperson Fidel Agcaoili said Manila had warned them would be no talks unless the rebels put the issue of "disarmament, demobilization and reintegration" of the guerrillas on top of the agenda.

The Netherlands-based spokesperson said to circumvent the rebels wanted to discuss the granting of immunity from arrest for all negotiators and their consultants, followed by "social, economic and political reforms."

Countering to the government demands would lead to the "destruction and pacification of the armed revolutionary movement of the people," Agcaoili added.

The NDF also did not say if the talks could start at a later date, or if they had been abandoned.

New arrest

Meanwhile, police said they arrested Delfin Pimentel, a 28-year communist veteran in charge of guerrilla operations in southern Luzon.

Pimentel, who was arrested along with his wife in a raid on Tuesday, will stand trial for seven murders of policemen, government agents and former rebels, a police spokesman said.

Ms. Arroyo wants to bring a negotiated settlement to the 40-year-old rebellion before her term ends in the middle of next year.

But the rebels had previously suggested they were not interested in negotiating with an outgoing Arroyo administration, and that they would prefer to talk with a new president. AFP

Comelec dragging feet vs foe, Panlilio complains

by Kristine L. Alave

SUPPORTERS OF PAMPANGA Gov. Ed Panlilio have denounced what the Commission on Elections (Comelec) is doing to the governor's election protest against Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo.

In a motion filed yesterday, lawyer Ernesto Francisco Jr. said the Comelec was dragging its feet on the petition for the recount of votes involving Panlilio's vote-leaping that was filed on May 11, 2007.

Francisco chided the Comelec for calling for the resumption of votes in the gubernatorial race.

The lawyer said its "unreasonable delay" is apparently behind the disqualification of Panlilio's running mate, Lilia Pineda.

Pineda, who is usually at Pres. Macapagal-Arroyo's side, claimed that Panlilio had cheated her way to victory by padding his votes.

Panlilio, a priest who went on leave to enter politics in 2007, won the race by a margin of 1,147 votes.

Francisco also said that the Comelec should stop the recounting of votes pending the resolution of the disqualification charge.

He noted that Panlilio lacked the financial resources to continue with the revision of votes, unlike Pineda.

Panlilio's husband, Beng Panlilio, is allegedly behind an illegal numbers racket in the province and had been investigated by lawmakers in the past.

Panlilio had said he only has funds for the recount until Saturday. The process is expected to last until late this month.

Corrections

IN THE SEPT. 3 ISSUE, a story on Page A10 of Access the Source—"Fa gas oil sites secured for truck cop arrested"—misstated that there was inside between arresting officers and the daughter of Director Wenceslao Cunanan during the arrest of former Abra Gov. Vicente Valera. The paragraph should have read, "Valera's wife Ma. Ella was also in the room when a tussle between arresting officers and Valera's—are Cunanan's—daughter began, Cunanan said."

The same article also misstated the surname of Valera's daughter. Her name is Aaron Dolores ... not Bermundo.

The Daily Gospel

Saturday, September 5, 2009
22nd Week in Ordinary Time

Lit. Reading: Col. 1:21-23
Gospel: Lk 6:1-5

One Sabbath, Jesus was going through the cornfields and his disciples began to pick heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands for food. Some of the Pharisees asked them, "Why do you do what is unlawful on the sabbath?" Then Jesus spoke, "Have you never read what David did when he and his men were hungry? He entered the house of God, took and ate the bread of the offering and even gave some to his men, though only priests are allowed to eat that bread." And Jesus added, "The Son of Man is Lord and rules over the sabbath."

Commentary:

Invisible differences: this is a phrase we've all heard. It's supposed to be used in our society as a ground for silence. Irresistible differences are a huge problem in our world today. We live in a world in which people feel alienated. Of course, there are many reasons for this alienation. We are all familiar with the common ones—race, education, status, money, and religion. Our own Filipino and history of our group feelings often go on another group because of issues like these.

There are those who may feel justified in their hostility toward others because of some wrong right act. They may feel justified in hostile attitudes and hostile actions because they have been done wrong. As a result, we can even make something hostile to our own God by failing to be the purpose of reconciliation. God wants his presence to us to himself or holy people. We are to be holy in his sight. This speaks of his purpose of God in reconciliation. As a part of this process, God is changing us from the inside out. Not only did Christ's death reconcile us to God, it also works in us to change us into beautiful people in his sight. Deo!

Jackson late for his own funeral

Front page A1

Jackson will share eternity at Forest Lawn with the likes of Clark Gable, Jean Harlow, Carole Lombard and W.C. Fields, entombed alongside them in the mausoleum's Great Hall of Memory—adding fans who might otherwise visit the pop star's grave to a throng.

Other stars buried elsewhere at Forest Lawn include Humphrey Bogart, James Stewart, Spencer Tracy and Walt Disney.

No explanation

No explanation was given to mourners for the service's delay.

The Jackson family entourage was the last to arrive, slowing up in a convoy of SUV limousines, some members waving to a cheering crowd of more than 400 people.

A few minutes later, the hearse bearing Jackson's body drove through the cemetery's iron gates and by four police officers on motorcycles.

At the hour-and-a-half service ended, Jackson's mother Katherine appeared extremely weary and had to be helped to her car. A guest said the service was simple but touching and emotional.

Gladys Knight sang "His Eye is on the Sparrow," and Chilton Davis sang "Heaven Can Say Goodbye," a tune he wrote for the Jacksons. A minister spoke briefly.

Friends of the Jackson family spoke, telling of their admiration of the Jacksons, who raised themselves up from poverty. They recalled Michael Jackson's sense of humor—if he were here today, they said, he would be laughing and smiling.

MJ's era overcome

Afterward, the mourners stood and followed the casketed, boldly flower-draped casket as his five brothers—each wearing a bright red tie and a single crystal-studded glove—carried it into the mausoleum.

Brother Jermaine Jackson had a difficult time going into the mausoleum, she was overcome and turned back, and it wasn't clear if she went in at all.

Jackson's daughters Paris, 10, cried as the group entered the mausoleum, but she and brothers Prince Michael, 12, and Prince Michael II, 7, known as Blanket, were composed through most of the service.

The children placed on Jackson's casket the spangled crown, which stood atop a phalanx of white and purple flowers.

Knight performed "Our Father" (The Lord's Prayer), which the gang said moved many to tears. There were two memorial portraits of a youthful, vibrant Jackson mounted next to the casket and the place of white lilies and roses in Jackson's lavish public memorial, red roses covered his casket.

Long, hot wait

Because of the Jackson family's tardy arrival, the 77-year-old Taylor and others were left waiting in the late summer heat, with the temperature much at 90 degrees just before noon.

Police had escorted the family's motorcade of 21 cars, including Rolls-Royces and Cadillacs, from Encino to Forest Lawn, with the hearse bearing Jackson's body at the end.

No gatecrashers

About 200 seats were arranged for mourners over artificial turf laid roadside at the mausoleum, and a steel armed moon, a mark of the devastating wildfire about 10 miles distant, hung over the cemetery.

A large, lollipop-like inflated light, the type used in film and television production, and a boom camera hovered over the seating area placed in front of the marble mausoleum.

Police helicopters with infrared technology scanned hovering the cemetery on Wednesday night to make sure no one slipped in. Sniffer dogs and plain-clothes officers patrolled the 120-hectare cemetery.

'Daddy, we love you'

Jackson's brothers—all dressed identically in black ties and each wearing a solitary white glove in tribute to the pop icon—served as pallbearers as the coffin was removed from the hearse.

His children reportedly left notes in their father's coffin reading "Daddy we love you, we miss you."

Nearly double the number of media credentials, 440, were issued to reporters and film crews who remained at a distance from the service and behind barricades.

Rev. Al Sharpton, who gave a touching eulogy at Jackson's public memorial two months ago, posted on his Twitter account—while the service was still under way—that he made a repeat performance Thursday night.

"What MJ went through was so unfair, yet he succeeded," Sharpton said. "In the end, he was the biggest artist ever. He faced the headwinds but he made it."

But there was no sign of said diva Diana Ross, who was named as a back-up guardian to Jackson's children in the singer's will.

A celebration

Invites issued to guests urged mourners to celebrate Jackson's life.

"We loved him, we laughed with him, we sang with him. We danced with him. But on this day, we celebrate him," the invite read.

Thursday's service contrasted with the lavish public memorial held at the Los Angeles Staples Center in July, which was attended by 20,000 fans and boasted live around the world to an estimated audience of one billion.

The few dozens of fans who gathered around the secure perimeter then watched the cemetery entrance struggled to see much.

Pink flowers

Maria Martinez, 23, who was joined by a dozen other Jackson admirers at a gas station near the security perimeter, gave a handful of pink flowers to a man with an invitation driving into the funeral.

"Can you please put these flowers on his grave?" she told him. Martinez said she picked them from a nearby park. "They were small and ugly but I did that with my heart. I'm not going to be able to get close, so this is as close as I could get to him."

The closest the public will be able to get to Jackson's vault is a portion of the mausoleum that displays "The Last Supper Window," a life-size stained-glass recreation of Leonardo da Vinci's masterpiece.

The ceremony ended months of speculation that the singer's body would be buried at Neverland Ranch, in part to make the property a Graceland-style attraction.

Cocktail of medicines

Jackson died June 25 at age 50 as he was about to embark on a comeback attempt. The coroner's office has labeled the death a homicide, and Jackson's death certificate lists "injection by another" as the cause.

Officials have said a cocktail of medications, including the powerful anesthetic propofol and sedative lorazepam, were the primary causes of death.

Dr. Conrad Murray, Jackson's personal physician, told detectives he gave the singer a series of sedatives and propofol to help him sleep. He pronounced on still investigating, and no charges have been filed. Reports from AFP, AP and Reuters

THE JACKSON family members (from left), Janet, Randy, Jackie, Tito, Jermaine and Marlon Jackson around the funeral service of their brother Michael Jackson at the Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale, California, on Thursday.

MICHAEL JACKSON'S 12-year-old son Prince Michael and father Joe Jackson leave by a hearse after the King of Pop's burial ceremony in the Great Mausoleum of the Forest Lawn Memorial Park in the Los Angeles suburb of Glendale, California, on Thursday. The ceremony was limited to 250 invitees mostly family and friends.

LEGENDARY FRIEND Elizabeth Taylor attends the funeral service of her close friend Michael.

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WHAT WENT BEFORE: The Chiong Sisters Rape-Murder Case

By Inquirer Research

ON MAY 5, 1999, CEBU Regional Trial Court Judge Wenceslao Lagustan found seven young men guilty of kidnapping sisters Jacqueline and Marilyn Chiong on July 15, 1997, in Cebu City.

He sentenced to two life terms each Fourteen-Jean "Boy" Lamahaga, 19, great-grandson of the late President Sergio Osmeña Sr. and scion of the prominent Osmeña clan; Antonio Acosta, 26, whose family owns several properties in Cebu, including Southwestern University Sacred Heart Hospital, and Alta Vista Golf and Country Club; Renato Adlawan, 21; brothers Jesus Aniano, 27, and Arturo Apiñong Uy, 30; and van driver Alfonso Cañas, 31, and conductor Ariel Balmeo, 22.

Oranges said the prosecution failed to establish that the sisters were raped and killed by their abductors.

In his testimony in August 1998, suspect-turned-state witness Davidson Adriano Bacus recounted the abduction and consequent rape of the Chiong sisters.

He said he was present as most of the episodes of the crimes, and pointed to Acosta and Adlawan as the ones who seized Jacqueline, 22, and Marilyn, 20, while the sisters were waiting for a ride home in Ayala Center Cebu.

Revived van

Bacus said the sisters were taken to a revived van on a house in Guadalupe, Cebu City, where they were raped in separate rooms by Acosta, Adlawan, Lamahaga and James Andrew Uy.

He said Balmeog and Cañas then drove the van to Carcar town where Marilyn, her head wrapped in masking tape, was pushed off a cliff. He said Jacqueline was taken back to the city early the next day.

Marilyn's body was found two days after the abduction. An autopsy conducted on July 20, 1997, indicated that she was raped by more than one man and, based on "total disarticulation" noted during the autopsy, pushed off the cliff alive.

She was found to have died of brain hemorrhage and physical injuries that included multiple fractures in the skull, left clavicle and ribs, a dislocated right knee, lacerated wounds on the forehead and hand; contusions on the forehead and abdomen; and abrasions in various parts of the body.

Jacqueline has not been found to this day.

Denials

All of the accused denied the charges.

BOYS ON THE BUS The convicts in the rape and killing of the Chiong sisters arrive in Manila on their way to the National Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa City on May 15, 1999. AFP/JOEL NITO

Lamahaga presented witnesses and evidence, including photographs, to prove he was in Quezon City at the time of the crimes.

Years later, his friends continued to proclaim his innocence. In a press conference in November 2004, they claimed that Lamahaga was with them at a culinary school in Quezon City where he was enrolled at around the time the crimes were committed.

Lamahaga himself, in a letter he sent to the United Nations' human rights committee in August 2003, made the same claim.

Death penalty

On Feb. 2, 2004, the Supreme Court imposed the death penalty on the convicts...except for James Andrew Uy, a minor at the time of the crimes.

Instead of merely affirming the sentences handed down by Oranges, the high court said the seven were guilty of kidnapping and serious illegal detention with homicide and rape.

The case remained on appeal in the high court, and three calls for a "fair trial" from foreign groups, including the Madrid Bar Association, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Spain Rights International, Human Rights Without Frontiers, Human Rights Watch

Lacson vows to 'tell all' on Dacer slay in Senate

Front page 01

investigation of the murders "for my personal consumption."

"It may not produce evidence to prosecute people but it's still information I would like to share," Lacson said in a phone interview.

He said his information would "probably" help in finding out who masterminded the killing of Dacer and his driver who were abducted in Manila on Nov. 24, 2006 and taken to Cavite where they were killed. Their burned remains were found the following April.

'Too much'

Lacson said he was coming out with what he knew out of frustration over what he said was a "vilification campaign" against him.

"The vilification is too much and I am being tried before the bar of public opinion," he said.

He said he would be reaching to his privilege speech not only on his alleged persecution by the Department of Justice but also "other matters so as to straighten out facts."

Lacson has been implicated in the double murder by former police officer Cesar Mancao II, his cousins aide at the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF) which Lacson once headed.

The Department of Justice has reopened the investigation into the double murder after Mancao and another ex-police officer and Lacson PAOCTF subordinate, Glenn Dumlao, were extradited from the US in May and July.

Mancao, Dumlao and a third former PAOCTF officer and Lacson associate, Michael Ray Aquino, were among the 22 people charged in 2001 for the Dacer-Corbito murders.

The three fled to the US after they were charged. Aquino is serving a jail sentence in the US for a separate case of espionage.

Operation Delta

Mancao told a Manila court hearing on Thursday that Estrada, Lacson and Aquino were among the six people involved in "Operation Delta," the alleged plan to eliminate Dacer.

Estrada and Lacson have both denied this and accused Mancao-ling of parting pressure on Mancao.

In two radio interviews yesterday, Lacson insisted that he had no hand in the killing of Dacer and his driver.

"Too much is, it's the first time I've heard of Operation Delta. I did not know about the Operation Delta that Mancao is talking about," he told dzRB, radio.

He said Mancao's testimony was "based on his opinions and not on facts."

Opinion, not facts

"That's very clear because he said what he knew was [that] former President Estrada had a direct hand as well as the others. But he did not say what I know about it. And that's why we can see that's opinion and not based on actual facts," he said in a mix of English and Filipino.

He reiterated his belief that Mancao was just "pressured" to make the statements.

"Even if they pressed 1,000 witnesses, they do not 1,000 witnesses and give a script to 1,000 witnesses, in the end it will be the truth that would prevail," he said.

While he acknowledged that Mancao had named him, Estrada and four others, Lacson said that Mancao had not substantiated this or provided details.

To file perjury raps!

Quoting his lawyers who examined Thursday's hearing, he said Mancao did not provide the details because prosecution lawyers didn't ask him to do so but only asked whether he knew who had a hand in the murders.

He said his lawyers were thinking of filing perjury charges against Mancao because before his latest testimony he said Mancao had executed an affidavit implicating the claims made by Dumlao that Lacson was involved in the murders.

He said Mancao executed the counteraffidavit before the original DOJ panel that investigated the case and which became the basis for the warrant of arrest issued against them.

Interviewed over dzMM radio, Lacson denied he ratcheted up from the presidential race because he was scared when Mancao and Dumlao executed these.

"I can't be scared because I did not do anything wrong," he said, stressing that he pulled out of the race because of lack of funds.

Due process

Instead of blaming Malacañang for their predicament, Estrada and Lacson should just submit themselves to the judicial process, Odaer officials said yesterday.

Press Secretary Cerge Remonde detailed the allegations of Estrada and Lacson that the Arroyo administration had pressured Mancao to, in testifying that the two were involved in the murders.

"Mancao has spoken for himself very strongly about the issue. He does not need our help to answer to criticisms his own independence on the matter. In fact, we would like to know that matter before the justice system and not appeal to everyone, including the accused, to freely submit to the justice system and to due process," he told a press briefing.

Chilling effect

Remonde also said the fatal shooting on Wednesday of Jimmy Lopez, a key witness in the Dacer-Corbito case, was a serious cause for concern as it could create chilling witnesses.

"The fact that the recent victim of murder was witness to the biggest case of the time, which is the Dacer-Corbito double murder case, will indeed have a chilling effect on other witnesses," he said.

Sen. Jinggoy Estrada yesterday called Mancao a liar for implicating his father in the Dacer-Corbito murders.

Jinggoy claimed that last year a lawyer representing Mancao had asked him for financial aid for the latter's legal battle and that he declined.

"Why is he asking financial support from us?" Estrada said in a phone interview.

Lawyers from Isabela

He identified the lawyer as Bernard Motoin, a board member of Isabela province.

He said Motoin had sought an appointment with him last December. The two met at the Podium mall in Ortigas.

Jinggoy recalled telling the lawyer to just go to Lacson for financial support.

After all, he said, Mancao was a former Lacson aide. With reports from TJ Burgonio

BDO

P22.0 BILLION UNSECURED SUBORDINATED NOTES ELIGIBLE AS LOWER TIER 2 CAPITAL

NOTICE OF NOTEHOLDERS' MEETING

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Noteholders of Banco De Oro Unibank, Inc.'s (BDO) Unsecured Subordinated Notes Qualifying as Lower Tier 2 Capital issued on November 21, 2007 (Series 1), May 30, 2008 (Series 2) and March 20, 2009 (Series 3) (collectively, the "Tier 2 Notes") has been scheduled at 11:00 a.m. on September 16, 2009 at the Open Area, Sign of the Arch, 9th Floor South Tower, BDO Corporate Center, 7899 Makati Avenue, Makati City.

Among the matters to be taken up includes the election of a successor - Public Trustee of the Tier 2 Notes in view of the resignation of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited - Manila Trust Department (HSBC - Trust) to take effect on December 22, 2009 in accordance with the Trust Agreements for the Tier 2 Notes.

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INQUIRER
OPINION

Loud warning

EDITORIAL

THE KILLERS OF JIMMY LOPEZ DID NOT ONLY make sure he was silenced forever, they also delivered a message that was loud and clear. And the message was: Don't mess with us—and our boss (or bosses).

Lopez, a former civilian agent of the now defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF), was gunned down gangland-style in Tenee Marriane City, Cavite, on Wednesday morning. He took 17 bullets. His female companion, who remains identified, had 16. It was a case of overkill, an unnecessary waste of bullets, except that every extra slug pumped into the victims' bodies was meant to announce that there was more where it came from. The question is: To whom was this unmistakable warning addressed?

Police investigators are working on two theories. One is that Lopez, a suspected drug dealer, had crossed some powerful drug lords. His execution was meant to demonstrate how they deal with people they are not happy about. The second angle is that some guilty parties wanted to eliminate an important witness in the nine-year-old Dacer-Corbito double-murder case.

Lopez and former Alex Diby were arrested in Indang, Cavite, four months after the Nov. 24, 2000 abduction and murder of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver Manuel Corbito. Lopez identified four members of the PAOCTF as among those who had kidnapped and killed Dacer and Corbito. He admitted having helped the kidnappers find a place where to keep their victims. Diby claimed to have witnessed Dacer and Corbito being strangled to death as well as the burning of their dead bodies to prevent identification.

The Department of Justice decided to reopen the investigation of the case after former Senate Supt. Cesar Mancao implicated former President Joseph Estrada and Sen. Ruffo Lacson, who was chief of the DAOCTF when the crime happened. Mancao, who was recently deported from the United States, claimed to have overheard Lacson directing then Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino to proceed with "Operation Delta," which he described as an operation to "neutralize" Dacer, Bob Estrada and Lacson have denied Mancao's accusation, saying Mancao was just following the dictates of Malacañang.

Justice Undersecretary Ricardo Blancaflor said the killing of Lopez was "a strong indication that the enemy is going to do everything to put a stop to the reopening of the case." Lopez was killed the day before he was scheduled to testify at the hearing of the case. Malacañang also voiced suspicion that Lopez's killing could be related to the Dacer-Corbito case.

Lacson pounced on the insinuations made by administration officials that he was behind Lopez's killing, saying he did not know Lopez and the other witnesses. Lopez had not implicated him in his earlier testimony, Lacson noted.

But Lacson's case is no reason for casting a suspicious eye on him. His past record as a member of the now-defunct PC Metropolitan Command as well as the release of Kuratong Baleleng gang members mean back to haunt him every time violence strikes down somebody with whom he is not happy. Neither has he been very candid about the role of the PAOCTF in the Dacer-Corbito kidnapping and murder. When the names of his men were first mentioned in connection with the case, Lacson was quick to accuse the National Bureau of Investigation and the DOJ of framing them. After Lopez and Diby were arrested, he claimed without producing any proof that they had been tortured to admit their role in the twin murders.

What is hardest to believe is that Lacson had no knowledge of "Operation Delta." After all, it was carried out by police officers who were closest to him, including Michael Ray Aquino who would later be jailed in the United States for helping provide classified information to Lacson, among others. In fact, another PAOCTF official, Senior Supt. Treñas Wee, was identified as the leader of the team that abducted and killed Dacer and Corbito. (He was also dead in January 2003 in Tanza, Cavite.) Even Estrada has pointed out that the PAOCTF was under the "direct supervision" of Lacson when the killings took place.

All this, however, does not constitute proof that Lacson had ordered the killing of Lopez. Finding the killers and who ordered it is the task of the government. And the authorities better do it quickly before the other witnesses lose heart or lose their lives.

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Hopes for modern politics

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

THE INTERESTING TERM "TRAPO," AS PRE-sently used in Philippine politics, is a fusion of two words—"traditional" and "politician." In the beginning, the preferred word was "trapo," a piece of used fabric cloth meant to wipe off dirt. Over the years, "trapo" matured in meaning, acquiring moral connotations supplied by the growing negative attitude toward politics in general. Today, the Filipino understanding of "trapo" has little to do anymore with being merely traditional; it has more to do with being dirty and immoral. This is all too ironic, because to be traditional originally meant a commitment to an all-embracing morality in a simple world.

The romance shift has shaped our understanding of what ails Philippine politics. Against the trapo, we now raise the image of the morally unblemished politician. In fight and, we are now in quest of the good and moral. But, how do we measure the good in politics? Is there personal virtue, or, probably by their political choices? The declaration of our political opponents as not morally one e vals in the contest for power but as the very incarnation of evil is exhilarating and dangerous.

So, my problem is not simply that we've had bad men and women in politics. Every society has them. Our main problem is structural: political system—the mechanism by which we govern ourselves—has become dysfunctional. It is no longer serves the interests of our people in a complex world. Yet it persists, by design and by public acquiescence. The preponderance of the impoverished majority is what breeds corruption, incompetence, and failure of governmental power.

By "political system," I am not referring merely to the form of government... the choice between a presidential and a parliamentary system, or between a unitary state or federal government. I mean rather the whole operating system by which we choose the leaders who make decisions in our name. I mean as well the entire quality of the relationship between the governors and the governed.

One word probably best captures the substance of politics in traditional societies like ours—patronage. The rules to the support rendered by superiors to subordinates in exchange for the latter's loyalty. Given the most pervasive and the sharp inequalities among our people, relations between the rulers and the ruled in our society normally take on the character of patronage. Under this system, the laws often given to the many are represented as acts of benevolence of the rulers, rather than as the fulfillment of the requirements of the social contract. The ideal leader is kind and generous, rather than knowledgeable and law-abiding. The ideal citizen is loyal and grateful, rather than informed and assertive of his rights.

This culture of patronage so pervades our political life that politicians are seen as nothing more than activists to determine who can give more and promise more in the short term. Accordingly, the image that candidates assiduously cultivate is that of approachability rather than competence, and compassion rather than wisdom. It is personal traits that are projected more than concrete programs of social reconstruction. Those are the things that make our politics traditional rather than modern.

It is not because our people do not understand the difference that our political system has remained the way it is. Their dependence certainly stands in the way of a more rational assertion of their rights. But poverty alone does not fully account for the persistence of patronage politics. To complete the picture, we have to look at how the many economic gains of the past, the peasantry and the working classes in our society have been crushed and demobilized over the years. The eventuals of the organized counterinsurgency of a more radical era have either been driven underground, or they have been so commercialized by party-list organizations in the margins of the political system.

Under the current in between the traditional and the modern elements of the political class. Though this is far from being a battle between the elites and the masses, it is not impossible to envision a broad coalition that is mobilized from political dynamics, business groups and social-reform movements. They seek a strict separation of the powers of government that those can make checks and balances operational. They prefer the long-term efficacy of a professionally run and non-monopolistic public bureaucracy over the short-term satisfactions of favor by patronage politics. They believe that politics must move away from the contest of personalities and celebrities that it is today, toward a competition of political groups and parties with clear ideologies and coherent programs of governance. They seek the consolidation of all forms of violence and abstinence from the political system.

We have no choice but to side with the reformists in this contest. Modernity not only will allow us to build a government appropriate to the complex challenges of our times, it will (it is more so hopefully) in the direction of greater democratization in our national life. The struggle for good governance has to be understood in these terms, rather than in the simplistic terms of a moral crusade against evil "trapos."

(Comments to public.box@gmail.com

The statesman and the retreatant

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A politician and a statesman? Here are some answers: (1) A politician thinks of the next election, a statesman thinks of the next generation. (2) A politician thinks of himself first, a statesman thinks of the country first. (3) Anyone elected to office is a politician; a statesman promotes the public good with integrity. Statesmanship conveys a quality of leadership that organically brings people together, and of citizenship, a spirit of caring for others and for the whole. (4) A statesman never gets relieved by the following principle: I must do what is best for the people as a whole. His job is political probity, even though he may face hostile conditions for carrying it out. (5) A politician makes the possible necessary, while a statesman makes the necessary possible. (6) And my favorite of all: A politician tells the talk; a statesman walks the walk.

No matter which answer is chosen, Mar Roxas belongs in the statesman group. His announcement early this week, withdrawing from the presidential race in favor of Noynoy Aquino, has removed any lingering doubts about this. Rather than lose any chance of reform for the country by dividing not only his party but also the reform constituency he chose to give up his own presidential plans and all the work he'd done for that past year to

The pity of it all, though, is that statesmanship is not a label that can be claimed by many, if not all, of the present candidates for the country's highest office. Yet, what the country needs as President is not just a politician, but a statesman.

There is an opinion that Mar was already a cut above the ordinary politician simply because he is clean and honest—traits which, again, unfortunately, most of the so-called "presidentiables" cannot really lay claim to. That he has the requisite skills in handling his executive and legislative positions made him an outstanding presidential candidate. In fact, he was second in my short list of two out of some 10 presidential aspirants.

What I found disconcerting was that I sensed no more or all that his selfless, well-intentioned gesture, will turn out to be as good for the country as he thinks it will be. I hate to say it, but it might instead be an illustrative example of the saying, "The road to hell is paved with good intentions."

I would like to invite to mind to the regard is the example of Nobel Laureate Al Gore. The reader will remember that Gore was the Democratic Party candidate for president in the United States, whose defeat was by the decision of the US courts, but by the decision of the US Supreme Court, which voted 5-to-4. Pinpoint, it happens in the US, too—in fact, it happened there first along partisan political lines.

Gore chose not to pursue his claim—a reasonable recommendation—because he recently believed that it might damage the country—both domestically and internationally. That was the act of a statesman. But alas, the succeeding events showed that by not fighting for the presidency, he may instead have done a disservice to his country, if the performance of his opponent, George W. Bush, as president of his country is any indication.

In a similar manner, Roxas' withdrawal from the race in favor of Aquino, although with the best of intentions, may not turn out so well. Even assuming that Noynoy will win on the coattails of his parents, who, without a doubt are a formidable pair, I think? I consider a love, and Cory I consider a saint), there is the question of what his performance might be. This country needs a president with visionary, integrity, love of country and competence.

Was there some kind of confusion and compromise of the track records of Mar and Noynoy before the decision was made on who would "carry the torch of leadership"? Alas, I don't think so. Roxas himself in his withdrawal speech, naively said: "Noy has made it clear to me that he wants to carry the torch of leadership."

Sorry to ask, but is that really good enough for the country?

Not only am I am now rooting for Mar, let me say that I am not comfortable with events subsequent to Roxas' withdrawal. It was clear to everyone that Senator wanted to make the run for the presidency. In why the announcement that Aquino was to go on retreat to help him decide on whether he should make that run?

If the decision is already made—and it must have been—the retreat has to be for the purpose of asking God's blessing on his candidacy—as why was just to start?

Is it because Noynoy's handlers want to milk the Cory magic and shoot that Noynoy is doing the same thing that Cory did—and not only that—but also raise his "devotion" to be made on the 40th day after Cory's death? If that is the case, shame on them all. Because that not only robbed the opinion of the ultimate, exploitative "magic," it is also a disservice to Cory's memory, and all that she stood for, as well. Cory was truly a reluctant candidate, and she agonized and prayed before finally accepting the mantle. What is more, there was not a single, insincere, manipulative thing she did.

Anyone who wants to assume the mantle of leadership and selflessness similar to that of Ninoy and Cory better make sure that it is deserved, and earned. It is not something that can be decreed merely because the same blood runs in one's veins. Rather, it is a matter of character.

Try for statesmanship, Noynoy. You won't regret it.

Public opinion relevant to 2010

EXTEMPORANEOUS of the presidential hour at a dinner Reform Agenda in a closed civil society audience, last Sept. 2 at Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, the topic assigned to me was "Expectations of the Filipino people" for the 2010 elections. Since the SWS surveys have not exactly asked questions like "What do you expect ...", I spoke on "Public opinion and the Philippine elections in 2010," not limiting what I see as the most relevant characteristics of public opinion. Some of those points have to do with identifying candidates for whom the people intend to vote.

1. Unpopularity of President Macapagal-Arroyo. It is to be remembered by her that most Filipinos have been dissatisfied with the president's performance throughout the past five years. In contrast, during the 2004 election campaign, the public's regard for GMA was either moderate or neutral.

President Arroyo wasn't about to let an inexplicably unpopular leader. The College of US Presidents ranks George W. Bush (now 2008 All) collapsed as much. Common sense says that it will be just as hard for GMA's candidate to win in 2010 as it was for Bush's candidate to win in 2008. The main task of her candidate will be to convince the public that he or she will be very different.

Another consequence is that Filipinos will definitely reject any constitutional amendment allowing GMA to stay as the country's chief executive, whether it is revolutionary. The 1986 survey post-mortem attending to rule MS to Cha cha was led in October 2006, and rose to 68 in February 2009, and then to 70 in June 2009.

These are consistent with the disillusionment of the draft Covenant for Reform in 2010. There is a strong answer to change by the Filipino people.

3. Serious problems of hunger and corruption. The highly alarming economic trend shown by the 2007 surveys is that hunger quadrupled in the last six years—from 5 percent in 2003 to 20 percent in June 2009.

The two areas of highest public dissatisfaction with the performance of the national administration are in addressing hunger and corruption. Both at -21 in our latest survey (SWS results in June-August 16, 2009).

Social Climate

Mahar Mangahas

This is consistent with another provision of the draft Covenant: Corruption has never been this bad. We must end it.

4. Public satisfaction with the working of democracy needs to recover. "Satisfaction with the way democracy works" is a world standard survey item, originating in Eurobarometer, and now used by Latinobarometros, Asian Barometer, and other regional barometers. I had to report that, according to SWS/Asia Foundation data, the percentage satisfied with the working of democracy was only 36 in the Philippines, compared to 59 in Indonesia, 56 in Malaysia, 79 in Thailand, and 83 in Singapore.

SWS has tracked this indicator since 1991, and found it extremely related to public satisfaction with elections. It had outstanding peaks of 70 percent satisfaction in October 1992 and July 1998, in the first surveys taken after the presidential elections of those years showed that transition of power was done successfully.

Unfortunately, its non-election years the satisfaction rate dropped to the 20s and 30s. The fact that it did not budge in mid-2004 (44 percent in June 2004) showed public disappointment in the late contested presidential election. Its recovery to 54 in 2007, after the opposition won the senatorial election, was a good sign, but to latest figure is only 43. Can the Philippines achieve 70 percent again after the May 2010 election?

The draft Covenant says: The 2010 elections will be pivotal in redirecting our country from its current path of worsening poverty and social decay.

4. Expectations and experiences of voting irregularities. The percentage expecting vote-buying before an election was 47 in April 1995, dropped in April 2004 and April 2004, but then surged to 69 in February 2007. The percentages expecting vote count shading, flying voters, and other harassment likewise dropped from 1992 to 2004, but rose in early 2007. These are worrisome numbers.

On the other hand, the personal witnessing of vote-buying, election fraud, and violence has been at low levels over time. The percentage who said they witnessed vote-buying was 17 in June 1998, 23 in July 2001, and 19 in June 2004, but it fell to 13 in June 2007. The percentage who saw cheating in the vote count was five in 1998, but only two in 2007. The percentage who witnessed flying voters and other harassment on election day were also low after the 2007 election than after the 1998 election. I hope these figures do not merely mean that such irregularities are being better hidden over time.

In closing, I addressed the issue of the public's possible reaction to Mar Roxas' withdrawal. In favor of Roxas' candidacy, of his bid to be the Liberal Party candidate for president. In the SWS national pulses of who are the "best leaders to succeed GMA," without pre-listing names for respondents to choose from, Noynoy has not yet made a mark (0.8% rating, July 22, 2009). In light of new surveys, I took forward to what the next SWS survey round finds.

* * *

Citizen Reform Agenda 2010 or Reform 2010 is a consultation process initiated by the Ateneo School of Government (ASoG) that assembles a very broad representation of citizens organizations to identify key reform issues that must be addressed in 2010. Bringing together 100 citizen organizations, it produced five Agenda Papers which were the basis for a draft Covenant for Reform in 2010. (Ateneo 2010 engages candidates and political parties on issues in the two-week and respond to the issues in the Agenda Papers. The effort, headed by Dean Antonio La Viña, is also on Facebook.)

* * *

Contact SWS: www.sws.org.ph or mahar@sws.org.ph/ibon.org.ph.

Corruption

EVERY DAY ON MY WAY TO SCHOOL, I ALWAYS CATCH a glimpse of this beggar after the jeepney drops me off. He seems to be missing his legs from the knees down. He is strapped to an old, fashioned wheelchair rigged with an improvised contraption that he uses to move around the area. Then I ask myself, "Is there more room south? Or do they really do not want to be bothered by beggars?"

Time and again I see vagrants and beggars dotting my daily commute, and I would like to think that they would not be better off living in farms in the provinces where they can be productive. But then I would quickly admit that I don't really know the answer.

One of these vagrants carries a chalk which he uses to write anti-government graffiti on the sidewalks, mostly in baratilla among English. His message is always the same: I am very much in need of help. "Stop enacting the obvious." And then I begin to wonder if the government really is to blame for the impoverished condition of the masses.

The quick and easy answer is no, these people chose the path that led to this kind life. Most of these people did not continue to earn an education, nor do they possess good jobs. In short, they have a world for such people: sites. That's how the Japanese pronounce the acronym NEET, for Not Employed, Employed, or in Training). Many are those too and do not contribute to society. A small few live on the streets like here. But does nothing comes easy in this world.

Another way of explaining the situation is to blame the government. But that is also fallacious.

If the government is partly to blame, why is it so? I list the oldest consensus would point at one thing: corruption.

Ah yes, how many essays and editorials have been written about this problem? I think it almost pointless to discuss corruption in this forum. What I do find necessary is reflecting on the premise that corruption is something ingrained in the psyche of Filipinos, that it comes to us naturally and therefore is so difficult to eradicate.

But the Filipino holds no guarantee, saying that it is easy on Filipinos to think that ones that think about it almost exactly border on bias. Indeed it was corrupt. I was that person that it is hard talent in our blood that the moment we come to power, we become vicious ensembles? Surely none of us will agree!

Jose Rizal called our colonial mentality combined with the power of the clergy the "cancer of society." But nowadays I guess it is more proper to think of "corruption as the new normal country, one that has metastasized into every part of our being. As we must fight back, as this we will be needed to detail by the bad cells.

And how will we fight back? To change the nation, we must first change ourselves. Let us not turn into mere cancer cells, and instead be the cells that fight it. The revolutionary professor once said, "If only our optimist were like the cell... with its nearly flawless regulatory mechanisms..." Like the human body, we must fight back. But fighting back isn't the end. We must struggle to maintain our body's health and well being.

A Catholic lawyer once told me that the Filipino holds great potential. And I had to ask him: How come we have never released it? Is it because we cannot, or because we don't want to? The Filipino within you must be protesting.

Bernard Jude M. Gutierrez, 18, is a BS Biochemistry student at the University of the Philippines Manila.

Young Blood

Bernard Jude M. Gutierrez

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are your thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twenty-something and below — Ed.

Sister never forgets

Sonny Tolentino III

MY SISTER DAWN NEVER FORGETS.

One Thursday, she came home from Manila without telling anyone. She was just there, waiting. From the Subic airport, she went straight to my boarding house but I was in school. She was napping in my room when my mother came to get the money I left for her. Mother woke her up and was surprised to see her daughter who was working in Manila. Everybody was happy that she was home.

She went to my home because my parents—here, my other sister's, and mine—fell in July. That year, she wanted a party for all three of us. I wasn't in favor of it because I didn't want to spend my money. I opposed that instead of a party, all three of us could just watch "Harry Potter" and have dinner at a restaurant. But she said that she wanted the members of our extended family to be together, and she had already bought all the tickets to the movie. I never had a party because she shouldered all the expenses.

Feeling guilty, I brought her, my other sister and my two cousins to watch the "Harry Potter" movie, but without the dinner as a restaurant since we were still full after the party.

We had fun, although we found the movie a little boring because we couldn't follow the story since we had not read the book.

The next day, she was back in Manila and our lives were back to what it has been for many years now, separated by geography and connected by prayers and text messages. To me, the text was a text message which said, "Last year, we celebrated my birthday. Today, I'm not with you. Next year, you're not with me. This year, since you can't be with me, I went home and yes, it was a happy birthday. Though it was not a perfect one, what matters most is that I enjoyed. After nine years, I was able to celebrate my birthday again with all of you. Thank you for fulfilling my dream."

I remember that my sister couldn't remember when I said a year ago, but then I thought about her message. It was a lie," "true," but I can't deny that my sister has deeper sense than me. She appreciates family more than me. I realize how shallow I can be. Here I am writing stuff about how families separate as time goes by but without worrying any effort to keep us together. She's glad she wished I was there to save my earnings for my future without realizing that my sister is willing to spend her savings just for us to be together, or on a special day.

I realize that Sandy and I are so different. She's wiser. She never forgets; I never remember. She's effervescent; I'm introverted. She celebrates all birthdays and other special days; I remember those when they are ours. She tries hard to be better; I believe I'm the best. She has patience; I can't wait.

I am so different from my sister. Maybe that's why she is my sister: to show me the things I'm missing, the things I'm forgetting.

Sonny Tolentino III, 24, is a fourth year Psychology student at the University of the Philippines Visayas Miag-ao, Iloilo.

History in basic education

(First of two parts)

IN MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD, SOCIAL STUDIES textbooks are banned for regarding content, learning goals and methods—and politics. For example, Japanese textbook writers have long had to grapple with their country's role in World War II.

It asserted That parent lessons that her daughter's Social Studies textbooks somewhat, Cambodia cannot be trusted, and Laos is inferior to Thailand—because the history textbooks teach her so." More recently, the government of Israel announced that Israeli textbooks for Arab school children would no longer contain the nonterm "Nakba" (the catastrophe) instead of the birth of Israel as al-Nakba ("the catastrophe"). The Jews call it the "Independence Day."

In our own case, Dr. Ambeth Ocampo, a fellow historian and head of the National Historical Institute, asks if there is room in our textbooks for such things as commemorate as the execution of Andres Bonifacio.

The debate remains unresolved. Nevertheless, Social Studies textbooks tend to suffer from what David Tyack calls "terminal blandness." M. Sebastian asks, for example: "Why are history textbooks so concerned when they are, by nature, accurate, as dull?"

How to be both factually accurate and interesting this seems to be a monumental challenge that confronts social studies textbooks.

Several conditions in the Philippine public basic education system shape the textbooks we use. First, the public school system, the textbooks we use have to be affordable to the dearth of school children and poor access to other sources of information, answer academic training of basic education teachers in disciplinal knowledge; and very heavy teaching load.

Prompted by the heightened necessity for excellent textbooks, we decided to focus our review on the public school social studies textbooks and the 2002 curriculum on which the current Department of Education-approved textbooks are based.

This paper proceeds from the historical dictum that "facts, while vitally important, should serve as the beginning of historical instruction, not its conclusion."

Facts are the indispensable raw material that historians use to construct the past with respect to such issues that questions as causality, agency and effect, and larger (philosophical) questions of claims to truth, the directionality of human events, notions of time and space, and so on, but even before historians employ facts, they evaluate the sources, both epistemologically (e.g., in terms of non-evidence or novel interpretation or perspective) and methodologically (with regard to the source's authenticity and, more frequently, the credibility and reliability of the evidence offered).

Why is History taught in school? History serves numerous purposes, but the development of citizens as meaningful members of a larger community with which they identify, is the training of the mind in critical thinking and sound judgment. A good citizen is one who, across elementary textbooks teach our children, obeys traffic lights, is good citizen, too, is one who is able to weigh options and make decisions, understands the rule of law and trust, based not on feelings of loyalty or partisan allegiance but on demonstrable grounds. The practical applications of historical skills abound in everyday life, from writing reports and accepting (or rejecting) them as trustworthy, to tracing household payments over time and teaching proper of goods at the market. Yet History as a subject is not highly valued and is best remembered at the one that requires a good memory.

In basic education, the subject is usually lumped with Civics. But while Civics focuses on norms and ethics, History traces what happened in the past. Whereas Civics focuses on government (elements of the state, various political concepts) and citizenship (rights and responsibilities), History has a broader scope. It is a chronicle of events unguided rather than exclusively in the present. But in our public schools, History as a subject is taught in only one year at the elementary level (fifth grade), and shares the Makabayan subject (Grades 1 to 3) with Civics and Culture, Geography, Music and the Arts, Physical Education and Health, Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao, Mathematics and Proper Conduct. In upper elementary school (Grades 4 to 6), History shares the Makabayan subject with Geography and Civics.

High school Social Studies, in contrast, focuses on History, Philippine History in first year, Asian History in second year, and Philippine Society and Culture in the final year the subject is Economics. Since most Filipino children do not proceed to high school (many do not even reach Grade 5, where History is first taught), our children pass up and take their place in society with little taking of our past.

* * *

The views are excerpts from the DLSU History Department's Policy Paper on the Social Studies Curriculum and Textbooks. Dr. Maria Serena Diokno is a professor of history at the University of the Philippines Diliman, and is past leader of the UP-Presidential Commission's review team composed of Dr. Michaela Pante, Rod Paguinto, Ady Gabing, Kristoffer Esquivel and Noel Lopez. Not one is a textbook writer or contributor. The team wishes to acknowledge the support of Ibon, a South-based action-research group, and the Stanley Foundation, its affiliate.

'Lutong Boao'

Business Matters

Alberto A. Lim

In 1999, THEN FUTURE FINANCE SECRETARY Jaime "J" Ongpin wrote an article in the Wall Street Journal encouraging U.S. and other foreign investors to participate in the debate Subic-Clark-Batangas Dragon called these projects the 11 most infrastructure projects.

The MOAs included such big projects as a steel mill, a copper smelter and a phosphate fertilizer plant to name a few. These MOAs were signed by the Philippines. They were to be financed by government loans and guarantees. Most of these MOAs became a heavy drain on government resources and were later privatized at the expense of the taxpayers.

Now we are back to a similar situation. As for contagious projects that were agreed to in Boao, Hainan, China on April 21, 2007, among them projects are the notorious NBN-ZTE and the Subic-Clark-Batangas project. The NBN-ZTE project was cancelled in September 2007 due to the public's outcry over its gross corruption and overpriced corruption.

The Subic-Clark project will no longer be financed by a loan from China. However, an unsolicited bid to construct the Subic-Clark was submitted by San Miguel Bulk Water Corp. to the MWSS, in order to legitimize the unsolicited bid, the MWSS bidded out the project. The project is now a "Swiss Challenge." The latter is an invitation to anyone to submit a more competitive bid. Undeterred publicly as one challenged SMWBC's offer as it would cost P1 million just to secure the bid documents, and a decision to challenge had to be made within just two days.

The participation by the private sector in such large-scale projects should be a good thing as it lures the government from the burden of incurring more debt. The cost of the Subic-Clark project is estimated at $250 billion, six times the cost of the NBN-ZTE project. Imagine the savings to government if this project proposed is contingently bid for several reasons.

The most onerous aspect in the proposed terms of agreement is the "take or pay" provision with an explicit government guarantee. This means that whether or not there is demand for the water to be distributed, an estimated P11 billion per year will be paid to SMBWC for 25 years. Since the amount of water to be supplied (50 percent above the current supply) is more than what the system needs, there will surely be payments from government in excess of demand. Such a exorbitant deal!

The actual cost the MWSS will pay SMBWC will be set by mutual agreement once and after the negotiations between the supplier agree on the contract clause what? The regulator, MWSS, is also a 18 percent shareholder in SMBWC, the supplier!

Moreover, the government also guarantees the project's hydrology. Whether or not there will be water in the reservoir, the MWSS guarantees 1,350 million liters per day (MLD). If the MWSS was unable to draw a steady withdrawal in 1979, using data obtained in 1936-1998. The study did not take into account the natural evaporation of water. Net of evaporation, only 1,000 MLD may be supplied. There has been no validation of the study by the public and yet payments will be based on the 1,350 MLD guaranteed.

It is estimated that the consumer will pay at least twice as much for water since the Subic-Clark water supply project.

It could be argued that we have no choice but to accept this offer or run out of water. But there are choices that the MWSS is not entertaining. Among others, Davao Blade Water Co. is offering to supply water from a different source with no tariff offset to the consumer. It can do this as its area has twice the annual rainfall as the area of the Subic-Clark, and still not built to build.

Public-Private Partnership (PPP) is the way to go. But the MWSS is not doing it right. Instead of a competitive bidding for government projects, the MWSS is open bidding from any source, which the two-tier distribution companies have urged the MWSS to do in order to get the least cost water source. Unfortunately, the MWSS is not doing it right. Instead of a competitive bidding for government projects, the MWSS is open bidding from any source, which the two-tier distribution companies have urged the MWSS to do in order to get the least cost water source. Unfortunately, the MWSS is not doing it right.

Alberto A. Lim is the executive director of the Makati Business Club.

Roxas' grit and selflessness

LETTERS

IF THERE WAS ANY DOUBT ABOUT Mar Roxas' leadership and love for country, his decision to step aside and support Noynoy Aquino's (potential presidential) bid should put this to rest. It takes grit and true selflessness to see the bigger picture of what is truly best for this country, and to set aside one's ambitions. Mar was a sure-win contender for the presidency, but we cannot afford an election with a splintered opposition. By stepping aside and giving way to Noynoy, Mar sent a loud message to the rest of our would-be leaders in the opposition: Do not forget what service to government is for.

For this election, it is not enough to mount an opposition to the status quo. We need at this time somebody who will see just put an end to a power-driven regime; we need a president who will stand for social justice and restore the people's faith in government and in themselves, a president who will show the way to the best of what our country can achieve, and carry on the legacy of leaders, past and present, who believe that the Filipino is worth dying for.

To reflect the moral and fundamental changes we just in government but also in our society, we need a president with the mandate to lead on Noynoy is the country's best bet for a united opposition and thus, for winning a resounding mandate for change and new direction. He will pursue the unfinished agenda for change that we fought for in Edsa, which a new generation must now see realized.

Should Noynoy choose to take up this challenge, good men and women will surely join him and fight this good fight.

—RON MEDRANA, ANONUEVO BELEN, Marikina City

Is this an accomplishment of GMA: Filipino slaves in foreign lands?

LAST AUG. 31 LETTER-WRITER HARRY U. Sally seems to echo Malacañang's official propaganda line when he said "we [sic] CHING] accomplishments, especially in trying to keep our economy afloat."

Except for perpetuating a situation where people, because of lack of job opportunities in their own country, have to slave in foreign lands in order to send home hard-earned dollars (which help boost our economy), what economic accomplishments is Sally talking about?

In fact, we have heard so many rogue claims of "economic accomplishments" but we have yet to see a report that specifically enumerates and quantifies these so-called accomplishments—like, for instance, how many factories have been established and jobs created.

—BRIGITTE SAYTON, jcllo@yahoo.com

National Artist awards not a 'done deal' yet

I WAS PRESENT IN THE MASS AT THE National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA).

A prayer gathering of friends and colleagues of the seven newly proclaimed National Artists was held because it was the feast of St. Agustin. It was a time to thank the Lord and to pray for strength and fortitude to weather the vilification campaign against them.

Merely wanting to fill the ajerin of the objects of the jamboree, NCCA chair Virata Labrador said that the Mass was being offered for the seven artists who have received proclamation letters signed by the President. She did not say that the contravers of the National Artist Award process of them was a "done deal." The controversial ceremony has been kept on hold as that the issues can be properly discussed in the Supreme Court.

Just before the blessing was given, Fr. Jim Belmon, who assisted with Cecile Guidote-Alvarez in calls with the Mass hosts Ateneanum and to the Sanctuary Mountain, asked her to speak. Alvarez thanked all the many supporters or groups that have been expressing their congratulations. She devoutly wished that after the "battle," there would be graciousness, generosity and gallantry to move us toward unity and harmony in Alvarez said, "politics is what divides the nation, it is a battle that falls the arts can bring and bind the nation together."

Unfortunately, politics has entered into the controversy and Alvarez said "we are grateful it is now in the Supreme Court's domain so that our justices can wisely provide the appropriate jurisprudence on the scope of presidential prerogatives which is exercised in many countries in providing state honors in the arts." Can you imagine the Queen of England being questioned for knighting Elton John, or the Emperor of Japan being questioned for giving an award to Bob?

—FRAY PABLO RAMA DIOSDADO S. CAYCHIRO, abbot and moderator general, Filipino Brothers of St. Francis, Christchurch Monastery, 16-A Bulacan St., Punta Princesa, Cebu City

Owwa fund intact

THIS REFERS TO THE STORY "OWWA SEE Owwa: Where's my money?" (Inquirer, 8/28/09).

Migrante-Middle East asked why Owwa does not use its emergency repatriation fund for the repatriation of stranded/distressed overseas Filipino workers.

To clarify, Sec. 15 of Republic Act 8042 directs Owwa to tap the fund in "cases of war, epidemic, disaster or calamities, natural or man-made, and other similar events of worthy prejudice to reimbursement by the responsible principal or agency." The law is therefore clear: the fund cannot be used for purposes other than the above. In these instances, Owwa, in coordination with international organizations, repatriates OFWs regardless of their status just like what happened during the Gulf war and the Lebanon conflict.

As a welfare agency, Owwa extends social services for the welfare and protection of its members and families. On site, however, it does not make any distinction on whether an OFW is a registered member or not. Under the one-country team approach, our welfare officers attend provide shelter, board, medicine, bedding, counseling services, etc. for every stranded worker, whether Owwa member or not, availing help from the Philippine mission. We facilitate their repatriation by negotiating with the employer for the issuance of the worker's exit permit and coordinating with immigration authorities for his/her exit clearance. However, under the law again, Owwa cannot shoulder the airfare of non-registered members using the regular repatriation fund of the agency; the assistance is Secretary's list of the Department of Foreign Affairs shoulders the air travel costs.

Upon arrival, Owwa extends to the OFWs assistance services, facilitates immigration clearances, and provides temporary accommodation and domestic transportation without charging stranded members from non-members.

Owwa has advanced the repatriation costs of hundreds of wounded and distressed workers (whose recruitment agencies could not produce the air tickets on time) — but for reimbursement by the responsible agency. Our mandate is clear to us; we therefore never renege on our obligations under the law.

We welcome and appreciate the kind suggestions extended by some individuals and private groups in repatriating displaced OFWs who, unfortunately left the country without registering through the legal government channel. Owwa coordinates closely with them every step of the repatriation process.

Regarding the reported increase in the number of runaways in the Middle East, we reiterate our advice to our OFWs: immediately contact the nearest embassy, consulate or Philippine Overseas Labor Office at the first instance of trouble or problem with the employer. Our Philippine missions will help prevent their abuses from producing into an immigration case.

Lastly, we would like to assure legitimate Owwa members that the trust fund is intact and that disbursements are carried out in accordance with the law and the mandate of the agency.

—GABRIELA A. BORJON, administrator, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration

'Zarzuela'

I CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHY SO MANY fail to see through the farce the Office of the Ombudsman has foisted on the Filipino people with its indictment of Benjamin Abalos and friends. Sec. First, there is no impeachment case filed against Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez and one of the charges is for having sat on high-profile cases involving people identified with the occupants of Malacañang. I suppose the aborted CITE-NBN deal is one of these cases. The indictment of Abalos and West is the way of stealing the thunder, so to speak, from the impeachment case against her.

Second, it is highly probable that Abalos and their were betrayed but that a case would be filed against them for not to worry. The case to be presented before the Sandiganbayan would be manipulated just like what the Ombudsman did to the case against former Justice Secretary Hernando Perez.

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo cannot afford to push these principals into a corner for, surely... like a pair of injured wild bears... they'll fight back, in the process, they might spill the beans. As a Filipino, I feel insulted by this, the... buffoonish produced and directed scenario.

—REY CIBOSO, reyciboso@yahoo.com

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Reinventing Negros products to stay afloat

By Carla P. Gomez
Bacolod City

THE WORLDWIDE ECONOMIC CRUNCH, threat from Chinese competitors, shifting lifestyles and buying habits—all these have forced members of the Association of Negros Producers (ANP) to reinvent their businesses in coping mechanisms toward survival.

From the Negros Trade Fair, the ANP's marketing initiative which is the country's longest running, yearly-held organized trade fair in Metro Manila, has been forced to undergo a makeover this year to keep itself from extinction.

Gigi Campos, ANP founding president, has for years enjoyed robust export sales to the United States, Europe and Asia. Her passion for entrepreneurship started when she saw the need for a basket to hold the steaming hot Puto Maya rice cooking nestled from the oven.

Campos was among the first to transform the lowly pandan reed, used to make bed mats and fish drives, into pretty baskets with an added touch of hand-painted exotic bundles that won the fancy of many homemakers from other parts of the world.

From a two-worker backyard operation, Campos' Beach and Abode moved to a factory, which employs hundreds of workers and many subcontractors. For 12 years, her Puyan baskets with ceramic handles, whose designs changed according to the seasons and color trends, had huge sales in the United States, Japan and Europe, especially Spain.

Even as copies proliferated in the Philippines, the company maintained its market lead.

Chinese copies

During a trade mission to Cannes in the 90s, Campos discovered that the Chinese were producing mirror copies of her baskets for one-half to one-fourth her price. By the late 90s, her company suffered setbacks due to stiff competition from domestic and foreign suppliers, especially from China.

"Our sales projections no longer hit our targets and I felt it was time to assess if we should close down the business or continue," she explains.

Reinventing her use of pandan with the help of interior designer PJ Somodevilla, Campos shifted to other product lines—table top accessories, accent furniture and lamps—but still using the pandan reed which she transformed some of the weaving patterns and the forms of her products dramatically shifted.

With new designs, Beach and Abode also reinvented itself. Together with her husband Herman, Campos upgraded the factory with more efficient in-house assembly processes. They changed the company's name to Beach, redesigned their logo, and updated a website.

Today, the company is back on its feet, producing huge furnishings, mostly for interior designers in the country. Needs also expect some products for Spain, Jamaica and the Middle East.

From masks to décor

Another entrepreneur who had to remake his business to stay afloat is Jojo Vito of Vito Prints and Pieces, also an ANP member.

When he started, Vito sold paper-mache masks. Received City being famous for its MassKara festival. Still into masks, he shifted to reusable fiberglass and resin components.

Vito says that consumer tastes were shifting dramatically to functional home items and that mask making was no longer as lucrative as before.

He began to produce household items, such as wall décor and luminarias.

Now, Vito enjoys brisk sales, and one of his lamp designs even bagged an award in the ANP's 2009 Bukenon Product Excellence competition.

Trade fair makeover

Even the 24-year-old Negros Trade Fair uses the urgency to reinvent or be able to survive, says Nildo Kilaydo, this year's chairperson.

"By the time it got to its 10th year, it began to earn a reputation of being one of the most sought after trade fairs in Metro Manila. Many other provinces used the Negros model as a template for their own," Kilaydo recalls.

"Then, due to many factors, the fair reached a plateau, and even the most optimistic of its members began to see a gradual decline. Fewer people were coming, and the enthusiasm of members waned," she adds.

The 19580 financial situation of its members and potential clients even brought the association to briefly reconsider holding another trade fair in 2009.

However, a review of the ANP's vision and mission made it commit to continue the marketing activity.

"We assessed our commitment to our members and our community and agreed that we could not fairly help the province's entrepreneurs if we cannot give them an annual trade fair, which to many is their singular link to the Metro Manila market," Kilaydo says.

"But our home is now time for a makeover, but we allow ourselves to sink deeper into the hole we were already in," she says.

E-commerce facility

First, the ANP designed an e-commerce shopping facility to be online on the first day of the 24th Negros Trade Fair. "This will make goods available for people to see online and purchase from us even if they cannot come to the fair," Kilaydo says.

"Interventions have been made to make sure that we will truly be showcasing the best."

Talented Negrenses, who are successful in their fields, have been tapped to join the "Kinamaan Ka, Palanggga Ko" and to use as inspiration for product innovation and design, she explains.

Banking plenty, especially in fashion accessories, an good-size of exhibitors increased by seasoned jewelry designers from Baguio, Kilaydo says.

The executive sessions have resolved in the case of leather cutouts for high-fashion sandalettes, the use of sea bamboo poles for sophisticated evening bags, and the conversion of nanoman pinoys into accessories, she reveals.

"We are quite proud of the turnout, and we know that this time, our buyers will not be disappointed," Kilaydo says.

The fair, which features furniture, home furnishings, fashion accessories, gifts and food from Negros, will be held on Sept. 11-26 at the Bodawell Trust in Makati City. Its e-commerce shopping facility at www.bacolargentaland.com will be available on the first day and will run 24/7 even after the event.

GiGi Campos shows her new product lines displayed at a previous Negros Trade Fair. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

VITO'S LAMP. An award-winning hanging chandelier of sea urchin shells made by Vito's Prints becomes an interesting piece when lighted, as each shell's pattern, texture and form is pronounced.

Taos pusong pakikiramay sa pamilya at sa buong kapatiran ng Iglesia ni Cristo sa pagpanaw ng Tagapamahalang Pangkalahatan

Eraño "Ka Erdy" G. Manalo

Ang iyong makapangyarihang pamamahala at pagpapatatag ng pananampalataya sa Iglesia at uugas na pagmamahal at pagmamatasakit sa kapakanan ng mga kaanib at ng sambayanan ay mananatiling buhay sa aming puso at diwa.

Mula sa Pamunuan at Mgiembro ng
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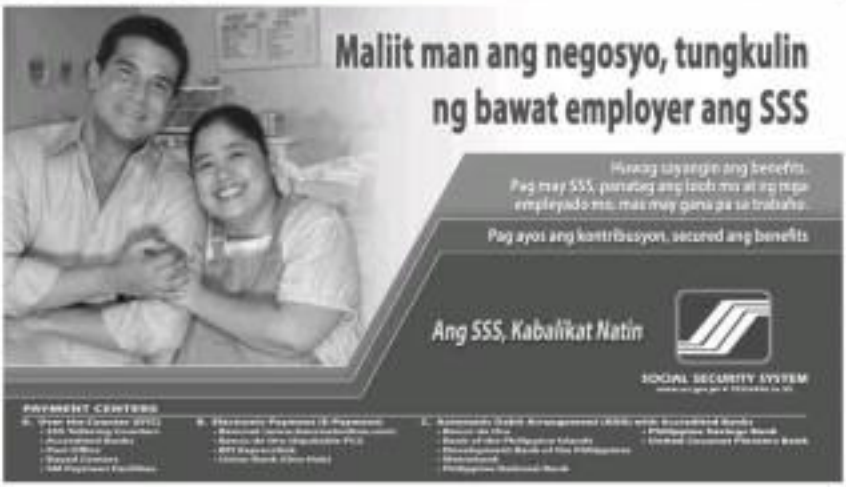


Nationwide Medical, Dental, Feeding and Information-Based Mission

Two million patients. 100,000 volunteers. 2,000 medical mission sites.

On September 6, 2009, a Sunday, more than 100,000 doctors, dentists, nurses, pharmacists, health workers, medical professionals and concerned Filipino citizens from the government and private sector leave the comforts of their homes to perform the biggest act of charity in the country, so far.

These Good Samaritans, in a massive display of collective volunteerism, offer their services for free as partners of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) in providing medical and dental services to more than two million Filipinos — all in a single day.

Dubbed as the "100 Percent in One Day" project, the PCSO's nationwide medical, dental and information-based mission aims to cover all of the country's 41,995 barangays.

"This is a first-of-its-kind project in the Philippines that provides fast access to medical and charity care from PCSO and its partners to poor Filipinos all over the country in one day," explains PCSO General Manager and Vice Chair Rosario Uriarte.

The project is envisioned to be both a celebration of the 75th Anniversary of PCSO, and a window for marginalized Filipinos from all over the country to access medical care and organized charity assistance.

For the medical and dental missions, the PCSO expects to cover 23,197 barangays in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, representing 60 percent of the total number of barangays in the country.

There are more than 2,000 medical mission sites to be set up all over the country on September 6, each site capable of providing service to 1,000 to 1,500 patients.

A medical mission site is manned by four doctors, two dentists, four nurses and one pharmacist. These health professionals are assisted by 80 to 40 volunteers who are in-charge of physical set-up and crowd control.

Aside from general checkups and minor surgeries, eye examinations, bone scan and ear check reservoir will be available in selected medical mission sites located in government hospitals and rural clinics.

Medicines to be distributed free to patients at the sites include amoxicillin drops, capsules and suspension, metropolol tablets, metformin, acid, paracetamol drops and tablets, and ascorbic drops, tablets and syrups.

"PCSO has been doing monthly medical and dental missions for several years now," says Uriarte. "But this is the first time we'll hold it in large scale in one day, targeting more than two million patients."

In Metro Manila alone, more than 150,000 beneficiaries are expected to avail of free medical and dental services offered in some 100 mission sites spread throughout the National Capital Region.

The medical sites in Metro Manila are manned by volunteers from the seven Catholic diocese affiliated with Caritas, which mobilized lay leaders and church workers to assist the health professionals in the medical mission sites.

The information-based mission, on the other hand, is expected to cover 100 percent of the 41,995 barangays.

Under this component, barangay health workers and residents are encouraged to send to the PCSO through Short Messaging System (SMS) or text message the name and profile of a patient in their community who intends to seek financial assistance from the charity agency.

This would allow the PCSO to maintain a database of prospective beneficiaries whose cases would have to be evaluated to determine who may qualify for the medical assistance.

The feeding missions would be conducted in selected barangays, mostly in depressed areas, in coordination with church-based groups and civic organizations.

The "One Hundred Percent in One Day" project, according to Uriarte, is envisioned to be an annual activity that will serve as a vehicle for spreading the "charity virus," and make organized and systematic sharing coupled with volunteerism as a way of life for Filipinos.

Indigent patients in need of medical assistance from PCSO may send their messages to 392-7676 (for Smart users) and 0939-4095001 (for non-Smart users) during the info-based mission on September 6, 2009. Messages are accepted from 12:01 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. only. Just type NAME (space) ADDRESS (space) ILLNESS (space) CONTACT NUMBER OF PATIENT. All messages will be relayed to the PCSO for documentation and evaluation. Priority will be given to patients in dire need of medical assistance.

Office of the President of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE CHARITY SWEEPSTAKES OFFICE
75 YEARS OF SPREADING THE CHARITY VIRUS

Across the NATION

NPAs back anticoal mining fight

NAGA CITY—COMMUNIST GUERRILLAS SAID they were joining opposition to coal mining in Catanduanes, calling on the people of the province to use "all forms" of protests to stop coal extraction.

In a statement sent by e-mail, Theresa Magbanua, spokesperson of the Bonifacio Ilagan Jaime Command unit of the New People's Army in Catanduanes, urged Catanduanese people to exercise opposing the mining operations of Mosmo Gen Resources Energy Inc. (Mosmo), a company partly owned by businessman and close presidential ally Enrique Razon through Razon Properties.

Razon is also a close friend of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo.

The NPA statement asked the people of Catanduanues to use all forms of action even as, it said, the AFP's command "is open to assist with all means" to oppose the mining of coal.

The coal exploration and mining had been approved by the Department of Energy on 7,000 hectares of land in the towns of Pangantihan, San Andres and Carramcan. The coal deposit was estimated at P6.2 billion.

Another 6,000 ha in the towns of Viga and Pangantihan, covering 14 barangays, have been approved for coal exploration and mining by the DOE. The areas have an estimated high-grade coal deposit worth about P9.4 billion.

The areas identified by the energy department for coal mining encroach on the remaining 60,000 ha of Catanduanes' forest land, according to opponents of coal mining.

A report by provincial coordinator Manuel V. Moya said disturbance of the ground surface and forested areas during mining operations would increase soil erosion and cause flooding in the towns of Viga, Pangantihan, Bagamanoc, San Miguel, Bato, Maraudong in San Andres, and Hitoma and Milaviga in Carramcan.

Mine tailings would also endanger watercourses and the sea.

Moya said coal mining would leave the forests open to extensive exploitation from slash-and-burn farmers, "farm-and-run" settlers and illegal loggers, which would result in the loss of forest cover capable of absorbing 0.7 million tons of carbon dioxide.

"Mining in the watershed area of Hitoma River will affect Sources Diamond Water and Electricity Co.) operations and deprive power consumers an estimated P20 million per year in savings," Moya said.

Mosmo operates mini hydro power plants in the areas covered by the mining permit.

MPs rebels also condemned the planned coal mining because of the environmental destruction it could bring to the fragile ecosystem of the island province.

They alleged that the government would use force if only to push the mining activities in which, they said, the police, military and paramilitary forces are to be mobilized. *Alan Escandor Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

NEWSBRIEFS

EVENTS

Hanjin donates

HANJIN shipbuilding company Hanjin Heavy Industries and Construction Co. Ltd.-Philippines (HHIC-Phil) donated P100,000 worth of building and construction materials to Bataan, Zambales, which was hit by massive flooding during a recent typhoon.

The materials will be used by flood victims in rebuild their homes. Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) officials said in a press statement.

Lawmaker Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV joined the first truckload of materials from Hanjin.

The materials included 1,100 bags of cement, 800 corrugated G.I. sheets, and 10,000 pieces of concrete hollow blocks.

Sook Hyun Yoo, Hanjin general manager for international trade, said Hanjin had also donated canned goods and other relief items to the typhoon victims in Bataan.

"We deem that the canned and dry goods we earlier sent ... are not enough because we also see the urgent need for the repair of houses," said Yoo in the statement.

Hanjin, which operates the $1.6-billion shipbuilding facility at the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, has been employing continued growth despite the global economic crisis.

The company, which now builds some of the biggest ships in the world today, employs more than 18,000 workers, most of whom are from Zambales and nearby communities.

SAN MATEO, Rizal

Army's outreach work

THE PHILIPPINE Army-extended several services to residents of Santa Ana, San Mateo, Rizal, during an outreach program recently.

The program catered to 1,103 patients for dental services, gave free medicines and medical checkups to 1,200 patients, and treated 60 patients to physical therapy.

At least 21 participants learned the basics of meat processing, wine making, soap making, ice cream making and salted egg production.

The 2nd Infantry Division hosted the outreach program with the help of the Philippine National Red Cross, Barangay Council of Santa Ana, Army reservists and civic organizations. *Romulo B. Fonte, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

LUCENA CITY

'Hot' lumber found

OPERATIVES from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the military seized a total of 10,157 cubic meters of space lumber and Team Mates Mobile, an official of the CENR in the Calabarzon (Cavite-Laguna-Batangas-Rizal-Quezon) region said Wednesday.

Mic Tamara, CENR Calabarzon regional executive director, said the 282 pieces of lumber, mostly hardwood species, were discovered by operatives from the CENR Regional Operations Group and Army soldiers from the 16th and 18th Infantry Battalions during an anti-illegal logging operation in the mountain villages of Sitio Madiwa, southern Quezon.

Tamara said the illegally cut pieces of lumber were discovered in Barangay Magsaysay in Infanta, Quezon, during a four-day operation. *Joelle T. Muller Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

STREET TANKS
Army tanks take the streets of Pagadian City on their way to their destination, rite battalions in the war on members of the bandit and terror group Abu Sayyaf.

Fight vs aerial spraying brought to DA, DENR

By Alcuin Papa

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCATES and farmers groups rallied on the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to enforce an immediate and total ban on aerial spraying of toxic chemicals in big banana plantations in Mindanao.

In a rally held at the Quezon City offices of the DA and the DENR protesting the persistent use of aerial spraying, Health (DOH) had already recommended a ban to aerial spraying of agro-chemicals, which poisons communities near big plantations.

A DOH study released in May 2009 confirmed that pesticide exposure was extending beyond the boundaries of agricultural plantations. Residue from pesticide spraying was detected in villagers' blood, in air and soil samples.

Gralla Morat, of the Mamamarat Ayaw sa Aerial Spraying (MAAS), said marching could stop the DA and the DENR from implementing a full ban on aerial spraying.

"We trust that they, too, will take the side of the people's health and the environment," she said.

At the DA offices, the National Task Force Against Aerial Spraying (NTFAAS), of which Morat's group is a member, informed their appeal to Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap to take a decisive action against aerial spraying.

The continued refusal of Yap to enforce the ban is "insensitive to a human violation of his members," said Bete Pineda, coordinator of NTFAAS.

"We will ensure that such acts ... will not escape unpunished," said Pineda at the rally.

The protesters also blamed officials of the Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA), which is attached to the DA, for alleged complicity in allowing the aerial spraying of pesticides.

The groups said Environment Secretary Jonillo Atienza recently ordered a temporary suspension of aerial spraying over residential communities. But the protesters said this was not enough.

Murder stirs protests in Quezon town

CANDELARIA, QUEZON—At least 1,000 residents of this town staged a protest rally Thursday and demanded that authorities unmask the masterminds in the murder of former town Mayor David Natividad.

"Our family and the people of Candelaria want to know the real killers," said Jason, youngest son of the slain mayor.

Senior Supt. Elmo Francis Sarmia, Quezon police chief, said the police are still investigating.

Executive was reportedly shot by two gunmen inside a Catholic church compound in Candelaria last July 20.

His two bodyguards were also shot but survived the attack.

Sarmiento's suspicions all pointed their fingers at politicians as the motive for the killing.

Police have arrested Adonico Hicaro, the suspected gunmen, who was described as a "professional killer."

Early Thursday, relatives and followers of Sarmiento carried placards and black streamers demanding justice.

They marched from the murdered politician's house to the San Pedro Bautista Parish Church in front of the town hall.

They also assailed intervention Mayor Ferdinand Mallonning for dismantling community bulletin boards that carried messages of support for Executive and demands for justice for his murder.

Mallonning said he had the boards removed because they were put up without permission from the municipal government.

Mallonning unwisely declared Executive's death a "accident that is still pending." *Joelle T. Muller Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

RESIDENTS OF Candelaria, Quezon, place lighted candles on the spot where former Mayor David Sarmiento was murdered inside a church compound.

Woman drowns baby, 3 other kids in river

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—A MARIAbid woman believed to be suffering from depression killed her four young children by drowning them in a river Thursday in Silay Mini-gomez, Barangay Cambaobo, Calatrava, Negros Occidental.

Supt. Danilo Fandoy, Calatrava police chief, said the woman, Florencia Bulilling, threw her 9-month-old son John Rey into the river, before jumping into the water with her three other children.

Fandoy said the woman apparently had second thoughts about drowning herself as she went home and told her husband, Hermenio, what she did to the children.

The husband rushed to the river, which was a short distance from their home, managed to retrieve the body of their eldest child, 12-year-old Hermenia, and attempted to revive her. However, she died in her father's arms, Fandoy said.

The two other children who drowned were Jonilou, 6, and Veronica, 5, the police officer said.

Fandoy said the families of the three children were all retrieved from the river by neighbors. The body of the nine-month-old baby was not found.

Authorities picked up the mother around 2 p.m. Thursday and brought her to the Calatrava Police Station for investigation.

Investigators on Thursday night said that they could not yet establish the motive for the killing.

Investigators, however, said the woman admitted to suffering from depression after giving birth to her latest child through cesarean operation.

Investigators said a woman displayed signs of depression as she didn't make sense during questioning by policemen.

Tesda chief says House probe of overprice welcome

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—TECHNICAL Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) Director General Augusto Syjuco welcomed a planned House investigation on the alleged P66-million overprice in Tesda's purchase of training equipment.

"I have no problem with that ... I have nothing to hide," Syjuco said in a phone interview Thursday night.

Antipolo City Rep. Joel Roghan said will file a resolution next week calling for an inquiry into the alleged P66-million overprice in the purchase of training materials worth P902,950,054.51.

A Commission on Audit (COA) report dated March 12, 2008, revealed that items supplied by Ali-Natin & Co. Inc. were overpriced from 4 percent to 4,722 percent per item. The items were also found to be inferior and were not used by Tesda personnel in regional offices.

Syjuco said the House investigation should consider an ongoing audit by the Ombudsman being done by a body that Syjuco formed and which had originally him of wrongdoing before the investigation was concluded.

Malacañang to Chavit: Behave, be upright

ONCE UPON A TIME Dolylou Hernandez, Chavit Singson and wife Cha Tiongson attended the Bulgari dinner at the Manila Peninsula Hotel in Makati City as a happy-looking couple. NOLIMIT PHOTO

From page A1

suspend on the summons of the court."

Singson, a former governor of Ilocos Sur, had admitted "beating" Tiongson, saying he had sought her safety another time in the lockdown in Quezon City that Singson had ruined for her.

He had also said Tiongson and her boyfriend should be thankful that he did not kill them.

The couple are separated. Tiongson has been granted a temporary protection order by a Quezon City court and is now "in a sanctuary undergoing counseling," Gabriela Rep. Liza Maza told the business.

"I fear for my life, the safety of my family and the people close to me including my boyfriend. That's why I decided to file a case against Chavit," Tiongson told the business in an interview in a Quezon City restaurant last night.

"Until now, I'm scared that he would harm me and my family especially after filing the case," Tiongson said she said. "However, for my peace of mind, I would like to talk to him but it's not a guarantee that I will withdraw the case against him."

Boarding on Singson's reported statement that he would not give financial support to Tiongson and her children if she insisted on only custody of the children, Tiongson said she was willing to share custody.

Her five children with Singson are aged 16, 13, 11, 9 and 18.

Asked if the President had expressed concern over the case that has outraged women's groups and advocates of women's rights, Fernando said, "We haven't talked about that. But I think the victim has already filed a case in court, and then we will wait for the developments."

Fernando could not say if Singson had used resources of the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA) to conduct surveillance on Tiongson. "We are not sure, but maybe you should ask Undersecretary Singson, or Miss Jee that matter."

Mr. Arroyo-appointed Singson is in his current post a year ago. His father political ousting deposed Dynasties Joseph Estrada, called a "payback."

Tiongson's exposé on the kickbacks purportedly received by Estrada from the illegal numbers game "jueteng" eventually led to the people's revolt in January 2001 that paved the way for then Vice President Macapagal-Arroyo's ascension to power.

Singson, 68, was among the administration's losing senatorial candidates in the 2007 midterm elections who were appointed to government posts.

Asked if Singson had done his job well, Fernando said, "It is not for the Palace to evaluate his performance because he has a spouse to the power of Secretary Norberto Gonzales (or to ask Secretary Gonzales on the first opportunity."

Tiongson has accused Singson of violating Republic Act No. 9262 (Violence against Women and Children) act of 2004).

On the phone with the business, Maza said Tiongson had contacted her office and sought help in her case against Singson.

"We could provide her additional lawyers, counseling, and support," Maza said.

The lawmaker added that a member of her staff who had talked with Tiongson said the former's face was black and blue and had a swollen eye.

In an interview with ABS-CBN on Thursday, Tiongson calmly narrated what happened on Aug. 21 and showed photos of her bruised face and arms.

She said Singson barged into the townhouse while she was having dinner with her boyfriend, went straight to her and hit her on the head with the whip he used to discipline his pet tigers.

She added that she thought he would kill her because he had a gun.

Tiongson said her boyfriend—earlier identified by Singson as Richard Canal of Quezon City—was forcibly confronted, beaten and restrained by his bodyguards.

She said she escaped room by climbing over the townhouse's balcony and jumping into her neighbor's yard, and that a friend later took her to a nearby hospital for treatment.

Tiongson said she was now in another relationship because she had been separated from Singson since November 2008.

"My point is, Why would I kill him that I have a boyfriend when we are already separated?" she said in Filipino. "I have been divorced..."

She said she had broken off with Singson because of his relationships with other women, soon to young as their teenage children.

"I thought I was the only woman in his life," she said.

For her account, Tiongson said she first met Singson at the age of 18, when she was a college student in Manila.

She said she fell in love with him and that they lived together for 17 years.

"I was very young when we met ... He courted me ... and I fell for him too. He showed me that more than he was a gentleman, generous and thoughtful," Tiongson said.

But everything changed when Singson began mistreating she said.

In earlier interviews, Singson said he had hurt Tiongson and her boyfriend and was ready to face the court.

He also said he had evidence to show that he was the one wronged.

He claimed that it was not the first time he caught Tiongson cheating on him.

"The first time I caught her, I did not hurt her and I just told her to hurt the future," Singson said.

He said Tiongson then started calling him and sending to him, saying him for forgiveness and promising that she would never cheat on him again.

Singson said he relented for their children's sake but forbade her to return to their house.

He added that when she asked him to rent an apartment for her so that she could be close to their children, he gave in to her request.

BATTERED CHE TIONGSON shows bruises she suffered after she and her lover were beaten up by Chavit Singson, her former common-law husband.

₱3-B ethanol plant in Negros Occidental is SE Asia's first

From page A1

pendent on imported fuel.

According to Reyes, the bigger dream is for the country to be weaned away from conventional sources of energy toward renewable sources.

"The dream is go renewable and I [bet Carlos] Bioenergy here has shown the way" he said.

Ethanol, or ethyl alcohol, the same type of alcohol found in alcoholic beverages, can be used as a fuel. Because it is easy to manufacture and process and can be made from common crops such as sugar cane, potato, maize, and corn, it is being seen as a biofuel alternative to gasoline. Unlike petroleum, bioethanol is a renewable resource.

Arthur Aguilar, chair of the National Renewable Energy Board, noted that Negros is fuel, with its vast renewable resources, from geothermal and wind to ethanol, has the potential to become the fossil-fuelish of the Philippines.

Aside from producing ethanol, the SCBI will also generate eight megawatts of power, a portion of which will be exported to the local grid to support rural electrification, according to SCBI chair Jose Maria Zubiden.

Zubiden said Bioenergy Corp. has already contracted 100 percent of the plant's ethanol production while the Victorias Milling Co. Inc. and Universal Canpower will be buying the power generated by SCBI.

Benefits for farmers

Reyes said the President, who had been mentioning the facility's construction, was happy that the plant had become operational to benefit farmers and growers.

The SCBI, which is funded by the Development Bank of the Philippines, buys sugarcane for ethanol conversion from planters in the city and surrounding areas.

The plant began operations early this year and made its first ethanol shipment to Petron in March.

This ethanol produced in San Carlos City is blended with gasoline to create a 10-percent ethanol-90-percent gasoline mixture, primarily to lessen and major cities.

"The project is a model that can successfully be replicated to produce fuel and power from both big and small farmers. It is the Philippines' answer to the global energy crisis [and climate change because our climates and soils are ideal for it," Zubiden said.

Carbon credit offsets

Zubiden also reported that the plant is the first to obtain the approval for carbon credit offsets under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) of the Kyoto Protocol.

The Kyoto Protocol, an international agreement between more than 170 countries, has instituted a tradable permit scheme to provide a way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by giving them monetary value.

Developed countries and private companies earn carbon credits, or units of carbon emissions, which can be traded on the marketplace.

SCBI chair executive Manuel Zubiden explained that the project's aim was sustainable farming for renewable fuels and power.

"There was a need to provide a model for this concept, which the SCBI has done with its biofuels, Zubiden said.

According to a statement from Malacañang, the President hoped that more bioethanol plants would be put up in Negros' sugar mills to lend the requirements not only of motor vehicles, industrial equipment and electrical appliances but of the country's main power grids.

The project has created up to 880 industrial jobs in the local community and supports 8,000 pure wood jobs for farmers, the statement said.

With SCBI going operational, planters in the country and farmers now get better prices for their produce, it said.

'Planter's market'

San Carlos City is now considered a "planter's market," with sugarcane prices rising to more than ₱1,700 per Tc ton from less than ₱1,300 per tc, since in the previous year, it added.

Reyes noted that the first sugar syrup factory was established in the San Carlos mills in 1908.

"Now after 100 years, we are putting up the first bioethanol plant in the country right here," he said.

Reyes said he shares the President's hope that the San Carlos bioethanol plant will be replicated all over the country so that "we can finally liberate ourselves from the uncertainties of oil situation and promote cleaner energy in our local industries."

IN THE KNOW

ETHANOL IS A WATER-free alcohol produced from fermented sugar or converted starch, and is made from feedstock such as sugarcane, cassava and corn, among others.

Ethanol makes for a good motor fuel because of its high octane rating, which prevents premature combustion under load.

It also contains oxygen and results in less carbon monoxide emissions, making it more environment-friendly. It also extends engine life and contributes to increased power because it burns slightly cooler.

Traditionally, ethanol is blended with gasoline in 5 to 10 percent concentrations to produce high octane fuel. Use of more than 10 percent blend would require engine modifications.

In the Philippines, under the Biofuels Act of 2006 (Republic Act No. 9367), domestic oil companies are required to sell gasoline pre-blended with 5 percent ethanol. Some countries operate on higher blends, such as Brazil with 24 percent, and the United States, where flexible fuel vehicles can run on 85 percent ethanol with gasoline.

In May 2008, San Carlos Bioenergy Inc. (SCBI) was incorporated to construct, own and operate an integrated ethanol distillery and power cogeneration plant, the first in the country and in Southeast Asia.

Located in the San Carlos Agro-Industrial Economic Zone on the eastern coast of Negros Occidental, SCBI can produce more than 30 million liters of ethanol and approximately 8MW of power a year.

It is one of only two companies producing ethanol domestically, the other being Leyte Agri Corp.

Source: Department of Energy, San Carlos Bioenergy Inc., official website, Inquirer Archives

ZOOMING PLANES Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes and other officials inspect the San Carlos Bioenergy Inc. bioethanol plant in San Carlos City, Negros Occidental, on Friday. Reyes hopes for 20 more replications of this plant all over the country. GERI ORE

SAN CARLOS Bioenergy Inc. is the country's first sugar cane-based ethanol and cogeneration plant in San Carlos City, Negros Occidental, which has a production capacity of nearly 40 million liters of ethanol annually, approximately 10 percent of the Philippines' ethanol requirement under the Biofuel Act of 2006. GERI ORE

49 governors back Teodoro Palace bid

Frances Mangosing

MALACAÑANG President Macapagal-Arroyo converses with Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro during the Filipino World War II veterans assembly at Fajardo Hall in Camp Aguinaldo on Thursday. PHOTO BY ALEJANDRO LINGAO

Ruling party taking its sweet time

Nograles said it was the opposition, and not the administration party, that had a score to settle.

"Every day opposition keeps changing its choices. I think that the opposition is more bothered or troubled about their call for unification than we are about adorning our standard-bearer," Nograles said. *With reports from TJ Burgonio and C. Calimbahan Jr.*

FH | folded&hung supports

Noodle house in hot water over 'glass tofu'

Frances Mangosing

Aplus METRO
Editor Abelardo S. Lluenday

Ruby Rose father-in-law turns self in

5 other suspects in slay case ordered arrested by Malabon court

By DJ Yap and Beverly T. Mistrinidad

THE FATHER-IN-LAW OF RUBY ROSE BARRAMEDA-JIMENEZ turned himself in to the Angono police Friday after an arrest warrant was issued against him and five others on charges they murdered Barrameda-Jimenez, whose body was found in a steel drum at the bottom of Manila Bay in June.

Lawyer Manuel Jimenez Jr. voluntarily surrendered to Supt. Romanel Bautista, chief of the Angono police station, yesterday afternoon. Since the charge was murder, no bail was recommended for his conditional freedom.

Chief Supt. Pedrito Pidol, director of the Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) police, said Jimenez was taken to an Angono hospital for a medical examination before he was to be taken to Malabon City.

As of late afternoon, Jimenez was still being examined by doctors and was on detention, Rizal police chief, Senior Supt. Jovarie Doniles, said.

Jimenez's surrender was prompted by an arrest warrant issued by Judge Hector M. Alexandre of the Malabon-Navotas City Regional Trial Court earlier in the day.

Initial reports indicated that Jimenez was in Barangay San Isidro on a personal visit when he received information that an arrest warrant has been issued against him, and turned himself in to the police.

Aside from Jimenez Jr., the Malabon-Navotas Regional Trial Court has also issued a warrant of arrest against his brother Jaspe, Leonard Dacuba (alias Ayday), Robert Perez (alias Obet), Eric Fernandez, and Manuel Herrera.

Bailable murder charges, no bail was recommended for their temporary release.

Of the six, Montero is already under the custody of the Philippine National Police-National Capital Region Police Office (PNP-NCRPO).

It will be recalled that he had turned himself in to authorities and his admission of the crime has led to the retrieval of the steel casing containing the victim's body.

The court's order, in effect, denied a motion filed by the Jimenez brothers last week asking the court to "hold in abeyance the issuance of a warrant of arrest pending a judicial determination of probable cause" on the case.

Probable cause

Atty. Jesus Fernandez, clerk of court of branch 170, explained in an interview that the court had 10 days to find probable cause in the criminal information submitted by the DOJ.

The court's resolution, declared that they found probable cause to proceed with the criminal case and that can now order the arrests of the accused.

The Department of Justice had filed the murder charges against the six accused last Aug. 24 at the Malabon-Navotas RTC.

DOJ Senior State Prosecutor Theodore M. Villanueva, as well as State Prosecutors Benito Oliver A. Soto III and Delfin Dell, have signed Jimenez Jr. and Lupe Jimenez, owners of the Bacon Iconic Jimenez Trading Co., as "principals by instigation and inducement" while the son acted as principal by directly participating in the killing of Barrameda-Jimenez.

Barrameda-Jimenez, once of former beauty queen Rochelle Barrameda, disappeared on March 14, 2007, after a bitter custody dispute with her estranged husband, Manuel Jimenez III, for their two children.

Her body was found in waters off Navotas City in June, more than two years after the event ended.

Standing from L-R: Japan Information and Cultural Center of the Embassy of Japan Director Yasuko Ikeda, Panasonic Scholarship Co., Ltd President Takehiro Tagoshi, Office of Student Services of the Commission on Higher Education Director IV Dr. Isabel Iñigo, Panasonic Scholarship Office (Philippines) Chairman Reynaldo Lim

Panasonic Scholarship Awardees standing (L-R): Loretta Dawn of Lanao del Norte, Frederick Barry Marquerra of Laguna, and Maryann Natividad of Pangasinan

3 Filipino professionals receive the 2010 Panasonic Scholarship grants

The Panasonic Group of companies in the Philippines has awarded recently the 2010 Panasonic Scholarship to three young Filipino professionals and outstanding graduates (OG) of Philippine universities.

The scholars, who will stay in Japan for three years and pursue doctoral in the fields of science, engineering and engineering-related fields' certification from the Office of the Student Services of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Dr. Isabel P. Iñigo, Japan Information and Cultural Center of the Embassy of Japan director Yasuko Ikeda, Panasonic Scholarship Co., Ltd. president Tadahiro Taguchi, and Panasonic Scholarship Office (PSO) Philippines chairman Reynaldo S. Lim.

The awardees are Frederick Barry R. Marquerra, who graduated from the University of the Philippines - Los Baños with a degree in Applied Physics. Nicolai R. Marquez, who is an IBM Food Technology graduate of the University of the Philippines - Diliman, and Loretta L. Dawn, a BS Biology graduate of the University of the Philippines - Mindanao.

Marquerra, who is from Laguna, plans to do research in radiation hydrodynamic simulations on the consolidation of a supermassive black hole and how galaxy. On the other hand, Marquez, who is from Cagayan d'Oro, plans to do research about the use of thermal colorants in food to replace synthetic colorants. And Dawn, who is from Mindanao, plans to do research in modeling, determining, investigating aspects that would lead to establishing the isolated bacteria as plant growth promoting bacteria by conducting various trials.

Panasonic Corporation (Japan), formerly Matsushita Electric Industrial Co. Ltd. established the scholarship program in 1988 to commemorate the company's 50th founding anniversary. It is based on the business philosophy of Panasonic Corporation founder Konosuke Matsushita who said that Panasonic factories and centers all over the world must give the highest value, grow and prosper only if they continue to contribute towards the betterment of society in which they do business.

Panasonic Scholarship program came to the Philippines in 2000 through the Panasonic Group of companies in the Philippines composed of Panasonic Manufacturing Philippines Corporation, Panasonic Communications Philippines Corporation, Panasonic Industrial Asia Pte. Ltd. Philippines Branch, and Panasonic Electric Works Sales Philippines Corporation. To date, there are already more than 20 Filipino students who have benefited from the said program.

Lim sees nothing wrong in local execs' China trip

By Tina G. Santos

MANILA MAYOR ALFREDO Lim sees nothing wrong with the recent China trip undertaken by some 700 barangay chairs as he stressed that no city fund was used for the travel.

Joel Ilac, director of Liga ng mga Barangay and chair of Barangay 859 Zone 93 in Pandacan, had earlier admitted that the money used for the trip came from the barangays' annual contributions to the Liga ng mga Barangay.

The officials, some of whom went either with their spouses or families, went to Sanchez to Mira in Isnt. last month and made a side trip to Hong Kong.

The trip drew flak, particularly from lawyer Vladimir Cubayo, who criticized the barangay officials' "excessive spending," saying it was a close relative of public funds.

Lim hesitantly said that questions regarding the trip are better directed to Councilor Philip Lacsona, the head of the Liga ng mga Barangay which organized the activity.

He stressed that the league is totally independent and separate from the city government, and that he has no jurisdiction over it, its finances or the activities it undertakes.

The Inquirer repeatedly tried to reach Lacsona for an interview, but calls and text messages made to his cell phone were left unanswered.

Nevertheless, Lim, in a statement, said that the travel was pursuant to the invitation of Shenzhen officials to take a study tour in the place so they could learn from one of China's progressive cities.

Approved by DILG

He said the trip was approved by the Department of Interior and Local Government upon his endorsement.

Before the travel, Lim said a request seeking his recommendation to find the chairs may be issued authority to travel was forwarded to him by Barangay Bureau director Arselyn Bona.

RAILROAD REPAIR
Workers rush the repair of a portion of the railroad tracks along Marcos Street corner Daniela Highway in Malabon City on Friday. JAMES DE DIOS

Detained ex-Abra gov asks court to transfer him to NBI jail instead

DETAINED FORMER ABRA governor Vicente Valera yesterday asked a Quezon City court to transfer him to the National Bureau of Investigation office in Manila.

In an urgent motion, Valera through his counsel, said it would be safer for him to be held at the NBI office rather than in the Quezon City jail.

Valera was arrested Tuesday night at his condominium in Makati City for his alleged involvement in the 2006 ambush slay of Abra congressman Luis Bersamin outside a Quezon City church.

He was taken to the Quezon City jail on Thursday night from the Philippine National Police Hospital.

In his appeal, Valera, who claimed to be suffering from hypertension and chest pains, said the NBI detention center is closer to three big hospitals.

Julie M. Aurelio

6 supermarts, 1 drug store in Malabon ordered shut

By Reynaldo W. Dionisio

SIX SUPERMARKETS AND merchandise stores, and a drug store in Malabon City were padlocked for not paying P5.03 million in income tax and P1.79 million in value-added tax, according to the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

The MBI said the seven establishments did not report the true amount of their sales revenues in 2008 as well as in the first quarter of 2009.

Shortened under the BIR's Oplan Kandado campaign were Asiamec Shoppers Mart, Inc., Sihan Emporium Mart, Tina Roque Supermarket, Personality Men's Wear and General Merchandise (PMWGM), and Gonzany Pharmaceutical Inc. as well as two stores of Sid's Pens and Pads Trading.

Those establishments and the days their shops were either seized declared or did not report their actual sales.

The BIR is hard-pressed to improve its collections as it has not met its revenue targets more the years of this year when the government intends to spend P520 billion more than the national budget of P1.415 trillion.

In the first semester, the BIR accounted for P270.6 billion in revenues, which is 11.9 percent lower than the target of P306.4 billion.

In July, BIR deputy commissioner Nelson M. Angw said Oplan Kandado, or the agency's campaign of closing down businesses establishments that do not pay the right amounts of VAT, has helped jack up collections by 24.6 percent in the first semester.

Embassy told: Change concept or face permanent closure

By Nina Catherine Calleja

TAGUIG CITY MAYOR FREDDIE Tiñga has ordered the owners of the recently closed popular nightspot Embassy in Fort Bonifacio to change their business concepts or face permanent closure.

Owners of the Embassy Super Club and Embassy Cocktail have recently appealed to the city government to reopen the bar and restaurant and cited the plight of their 150 employees.

But as of yesterday, the Embassy remained closed on the order of the city government, following the stabbing of businessman Dennis Stevens II by regular club customer Hilbar Jimenez.

Employees of the bar alleged by helped Jimenez escape through the bar's backdoor and refused to give vital information about the incident to responding policemen.

Tiñga told Embassy's owners in a meeting to change the bar's image—from a high-end solid party place to a more wholesome hangout for all people.

"The Embassy will remain padlocked until the management complies with this requirement," he said in a statement Friday.

Embassy Super Club and Embassy Cocktail were padlocked on Aug. 26 after Stevens's family filed a complaint to Tiñga.

In a separate statement, Erik Cua, one of the owners of Embassy, is seeking for reconsideration of the city order to close down the club.

Cua clarified that the stabbing incident occurred inside the Embassy Cuisine Restaurant and that, an establishment adjacent to Embassy Super Club.

OPENS SEPTEMBER 16 AT GLORIETTA 4, GREENBELT 3 & TRINOMA CINEMAS
EXCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT
crossing over
"Terrific performances from a first-rate ensemble cast..."
"Engrossing, thoroughly entertaining..."

METRO BRIEFS

Eraño G. Manalo Ave. proposed

A (BLEZIN CITY) councilor is pushing for the renaming of Central Avenue in Brgy. Tandang Sora after one of the leaders of the Iglesia ni Cristo who passed away early this week. In a proposed ordinance, city councilor and majority floor leader Antonio Inton Jr. urged that the six-km-of-road near the INC central temple be renamed as Eraño G. Manalo Ave., "as a fitting tribute and in recognition of the spiritual, civic and services rendered by Bro. Eraño G. Manalo," his measure read. **Julie M. Aurelio**

Actress' aide charged

A FORMER PERSONAL assistant of actress Jennylyn Mercado has been charged with qualified theft before a Quezon City court for allegedly using P160,000 of the actress' checks for her own benefit. In a two-page criminal information, Rowena Palmares was charged with qualified theft which stemmed from a 2008 complaint affidavit filed by Mercado. The ball was recommended for Palmares's temporary liberty, according to the indictment signed by the assistant city prosecutor Arlene Tagaban. Tagaban likewise dismissed the ballification complaint against Palmares, as there was no evidence to establish that Mercado's signature on the stolen checks was indeed falsified. **Julie M. Aurelio**

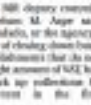
2 killed after robbing drug store

TWO MEN were killed in a shootout with police after taking an hour alleged attempt to rob a branch of Mercury Drugstore in Batasan Hills, Quezon City, yesterday. Police said the slain cops, one of whom was identified through an identification card as Robert Sapitan, had entered the drug store on Edsa and Tomas Street at around 7 p.m. One of them then snapped his right arm over the neck of the duty guard and pointed a gun at his side. The gun then fired its light two off, forcing the suspect to fire several shots that shattered the front door's glass. Jose Rizal. But other suspect told his companion of the presence of several policemen in the area. The two fled aboard a motorcycle but the police, who heard the gunshots, gave chase. Not far from the scene, the suspects got off their bike and tried to escape while firing at pursuing policemen. The gunmen killed both, killing them. **Nancy C. Carvajal**

Surallos; 70

Angelito "Lito" Peñas Surallos Sr., former lead vocalist of the 60s Clubmen and rookie bandit, died from cardiac cancer on Aug. 29 in New York. He was 70. Surallos is survived by his wife Veronica, children Annabelle and Angel, Amanda and Anabel, Antonette and Rodolfo, and Angelito Jr., grandchildren Alexandra and Gabriel Angelo, Kevin Michael, Melissa and Kristina, and Anna Jessica and Aaron Jericho. His remains will be arriving on Sunday, Sept. 6 and will be at the St. Paul the Apostle Chapel along Sct. Santiago St., corner Mother Ignacia and Timog Avenues, Quezon City. Interment will be at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 9, at Heaven's Gate Memorial Park in Antipolo City.

Try to understand Chavit Singson



ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

FORMER PRESIDENT ESTRADA and Sen. Ping Lacson stand accused of the double murders after former Ilocos Sur Gov. Chavit Singson linked them to the killing of publisher Bubby Dacer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito.

When I was a police reporter I learned there is no perfect crime, that the criminal, no matter how he is able to hide his crime, will be found out sooner or later.

Incidentally, then Sec. Oscar Larson, who was with the Metrocom Intelligence and Security Group, told me that when I was covering the Metrocom for the Manila Bulletin in the 1970s.

It seems that what Ping told me long ago rings hell-true.

* * *

Erap and Lacson's vehement denial in no match for the statement of Marcos about their involvement in the twin murders.

Moreover, now Erap and Lacson's twisted stance first at the Presidential Anti-Crime Commission headed by then Vice President Erap, and at the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF), headed by then PNP Director General Lacson.

The two cronies will give evidence to Marcos's reason for spilling the beans on his former superiors; that he's guilt-stricken and wants to make a clean breast of it.

* * *

Iglesia ni Cristo (INC) Executive Minister Eraño "Ed Erdy" Manalo was a charismatic religious leader.

But unlike other charismatic leaders, Ka Erdy never took advantage of government leaders who groveled at his feet for votes.

Ka Erdy neither asked loans from the government nor sold his landholdings in ridiculously symbolic prices.

He was a private man.

* * *

Ka Erdy's groups and bloodline hearts denounce Charter Change, the move to let governor and deputy national security advisor, for hooking up his live-in partner whom he caught with another man.

I'm not saying he was right, but we should understand him in the context of our macho society.

Any other Filipino man who caught his wife or partner in bed with another man would have acted the same way Singson did. Or even worse.

Cheryll Deguzo, his partner, with whom he has five children, the first and second three she was unfaithful.

But a third time? There's a limit to one's ability to forgive, especially for a man like Chavit who doesn't want to lose face with other men.

* * *

Yes, we have a country that condones a philandering husband five holes down open-an unfaithful wife.

Even our justice system lends itself to understanding up on a husband who kills his wife and leave if he catches them in flagrante delicto.

But that's the way it is in this country.

And it will take a generation to change society's attitude toward women.

* * *

Chavit didn't tell me that, but one of his bodyguards did.

The love of Singson's live-in partner suffered a late severe blow death. We live it to your imagination.

Nato airstrike in Afghanistan kills up to 90

KABUL—A NATO jet blasted two fuel tankers hijacked by the Taliban in northern Afghanistan, setting off a huge fireball on Friday that killed up to 90 people, Afghan officials said.

The Nato command said a "large number of insurgents" were killed or injured in the predawn attack near the village of Omar Khel in Kunduz province. An Afghan police officer said the 90 dead included about 40 civilians who were siphoning fuel from the trucks.

He spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the information.

The top Nato commander, Gen. Stanley McChrystal, has ordered curbs on airstrikes after a string backlash among Afghans against the high number of civilians killed in such military operations.

Police Chief Gulam Mahmoli, the said Taliban fighters stopped the vehicles as they were about to cross the Kunduz River.

Many Lt. Cmdr. Christine Sidenstricker, a public affairs officer, said three warplanes attacked and destroyed the two tankers after determining that there were no civilians in the area.

She said that Nato and the Afghan government are investigating reports of civilians casualties.

Another Nato spokesperson said one reason the fuel tankers were targeted was they are frequently used in suicide attacks.

Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid said insurgents hijacked the trucks as they were headed from Tajikistan to supply Nato forces in Kabul.

When the hijackers tried to drive them across the Kunduz River, the vehicles became stuck in the mud and the insurgents opened valves to release fuel and lighten the loads, he said. He said about 300 villagers swarmed the trucks to collect the fuel despite warnings that they might be hit with an airstrike, he said.

Mujahid said no Taliban died in the attack.

Kunduz Gov. Mohammad Omar, who also gave the 90 deaths figure, said a local Taliban commander and four Chechen fighters were among those killed.

Many of the bodies were burned beyond recognition.

Hamayoun Khanzeb, director of the Kunduz hospital, said 12 people were being treated for severe burns. He could not say whether they were civilians or insurgents, although one was a 10-year-old boy.

He said the hospital had only one confirmed death—a truck driver.

In Kabul, the deputy chief of the UN mission, Peter Galbraith, said he was "very concerned" by reports of civilian casualties in Kunduz and that all efforts must be undertaken to save for the wounded and compensate families of the dead.

"Steps must also be taken to examine what happened and why no airstrike was employed in circumstances where it was hard to determine with certainty that civilians were not present," he said, adding that a UN team would be sent to Kunduz to investigate.

Britain previous had been relatively peaceful until violence began rising earlier this year. German forces who are based there were under almost daily attack, including rockets and mortars as well as bomb and small arms fire against patrols.

Violence has soared across much of the country since President Barack Obama ordered 21,000 US troops to Afghanistan, shifting the focus of the US-led war on Islamic militants from Iraq.

Fifty-one US troops died in Afghanistan in August, making it the bloodiest month for American forces there since the US-led invasion in late 2001.

Rising casualties during this summer's fighting have stoked mixed support for the war in the US, Britain and other allied countries.

On Thursday, US Defense Secretary Robert Gates said that the war is worth fighting and signaled for the first time that many be willing to send more troops after months of publicly resisting a military increase. AP

Origin of California wildfire investigated

LOS ANGELES—AUTHORITIES have launched a homicide investigation after determining a massive Los Angeles-area blaze that killed two firefighters was intentionally set.

Los Angeles County sheriff's officials started the investigation on Thursday, five days after the two men died when their truck plunged 200 meters down a steep mountain road. The fire north of Los Angeles has been burning for 10 days.

Los Angeles County Deputy Fire Chief Mike Bryant said he was glad investigators were making progress, but "it doesn't mend my broken heart."

"These were two great men that died," he said. "We've got to get this fire out so no one else gets hurt."

County fire Capt. Ted Hall and Specialist Arnaldo Quinones expressed a fire crew, made up mostly of prison inmates, at a forum campsite. They died on Sunday in Station Canyon while trying to find an escape route for the crew after flames overran the camp.

Officials said forensic evidence at the blaze's point of origin initiated the wildfire—one of the largest in Southern California's history—sans an act of arson, but they declined to elaborate on the evidence to an not to jeopardize the ongoing investigation.

"We believe that this was created by someone intentionally or as a fire," sheriff's spokesperson Steve Whitmore said.

The fire has burned 365 square kilometers, or 59,058 hectares, of the Angeles National Forest, where many city residents escape the sweltering city during the summer. It was 39 percent contained.

Small towns and water-dropping helicopters had almost contained the fire's western flank in the rugged canyon near Pacoima, but 161 km of fire line have yet to be cut. US Forest Service Incident Commander Mike Dietrich said.

A historic observatory and TV radio and other antennas on Mount Wilson, which at one point was dangerously close to the flames, are "looking pretty darn good," he said, but that fire is spreading east into the wilderness and down toward foothill cities of Altadena, Sierra Madre and Arcadia.

Even in a landscape blackened by wildfires, clear demand for investigators following the path of a blaze and trying to find out how it started. Investigators start at the place where firefighters were first called and work backward.

Jeff Tetzell, a wildfire investigator for the Bureau of Land Management, said even in characterizes, investigators can detect important signs in the soil.

"Fire changes the structure as well as destroys it," said Tetzell, a veteran of 50 wildfires who is based in Ukiah. "He can follow the progression back to the point at which it started."

Clues can come from burned trees and grasses, where the flames burned hotter, can tell you about the direction and speed a fire was moving. Investigators search for the remains of whatever started the fire: a charred match or cigarette butt, a piece of metal from a car as part of a power cable. If no such object is found, they can conclude that a fire was "hot set," meaning it was started by a person holding a lighter to the brush. AP

CALIFORNIA: Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (center) lifts a charred chainlink as US Rep. Adam Schiff (left) and California State Insurance Commissioner Steve Poizner (right) look on while touring burned homes. —

IN THIS Aug. 11, 2009, photo, a man rows past the lake side home of Burma's detained pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi in Rangoon. Suu Kyi plans to request her disciplined army many home to improve security. —

Burmese court accepts Suu Kyi appeal

RANGOON—A COURT IN junta-ruled Burma (Myanmar) agreed on Friday to hear an appeal by opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi against her conviction that extended her house arrest by another 18 months, her lawyer said.

The Insein lawyer Nyan Win said guilty last month of breaking security laws by housing an American, initially misidentified and that was sparked by an incident in which an American man swam uninvited to her lakeside mansion.

"The court agreed to hear the appeal. Both sides, the government and ourselves, have to give our arguments on Sept. 14," Nyan Win told Reuters Kyi Win said.

Her lawyers had lodged the appeal at Rangoon (Yangon) divisional court on Thursday but the judges could have refused it.

The court also agreed to hear appeals by two female aides who live with Suu Kyi and had also been convicted, Kyi Win said.

"It is the right decision to accept the case. We appeal for the release of four things four days," Kyi," said Nyan. Win, the spokesperson for Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy.

The original verdict sparked international outrage and the imposition of harsher sanctions against Burma's ruling generals, who have already kept Suu Kyi locked up for 14 of the past 20 years.

Critics have accused the military regime of using the charges against the 64-year-old dissident to ensure she no longer her leads up during elections due to be held next year.

Suu Kyi had insisted on her innocence during the trial held at Rangoon's notorious Insein Prison, saying she allowed US swimmer John Yettaw to stay for two nights at her home because he was ill.

Yettaw was sentenced to seven years' hard labor for the stunt to early May but was freed after a visit by US Sen. Jim Webb last month, on what the regime said were humanitarian grounds because of health problems. AFP

Study finds potential way to make an AIDS vaccine

WASHINGTON—THE DISCOVery of immune system particles that attack the AIDS virus may finally open a way to make a vaccine that could protect people against the deadly and incurable infection, US researchers said on Thursday.

They used new technology to troll through the blood of 1,800 people infected with the AIDS virus and identified two immune system components called antibodies that could neutralize the virus.

And they found a new part of the virus that the antibodies attack, offering a new way to dodge a vaccine, they reported in the journal Science.

"So now we may have a better chance of designing a vaccine that will elicit such broadly neutralizing antibodies, which we think are key to successful vaccine development," said Dennis Burton of The Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, California, who led the study.

"The findings themselves are an exciting advance toward the goal of an effective AIDS vaccine because now we've got a new, potentially better target on HIV to focus our efforts for vaccine design," added Wayne Koff of the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative, or IAVI, which sponsored the study.

Since the AIDS pandemic started in the early 1980s, more than 25 million people globally have died from the virus. The World Health Organization estimates that 33 million are currently infected.

There is no cure, although a cocktail of drugs can help keep the virus under control. Efforts to make a vaccine have failed almost completely.

Part of this is because the virus mutates so much that any one person is infected with millions of different versions, each one appearing different to the immune system.

In addition, the virus infects the very immune cells that are supposed to help protect the body. And if even one virus gets past the immune defense, it appears to set up a lifelong infection. No drug has been able to eradicate it.

IAVI director Dr. Seth Berkley said the findings will not lead directly to a vaccine, but show that there are new and better ways to design one.

He said 10 percent of the patients whose blood was screened had a strong antibody response to the virus. "We have people with even more potent serums out there. We will probably see more," he said in a telephone interview.

It may also be possible to use such antibodies as therapy themselves—such as the genetic engineering of blood cells to produce them, Berkley said, is a vaccine that produces antibodies that could stop the virus from ever infecting a person in the first place. Reuters

US woes won't affect Reader's Digest Asia

THE ANNOUNCED RESTRUCTURING of the US Reader's Digest Association (RDA) has no impact on its business in Asia which continues to go from strength to strength, Paul Hinds, president of Reader's Digest Asia Pacific said noting managing director of Reader's Digest Asia, said.

"Reader's Digest Asia's operations are not part of the US debt restructure process and continue to operate as strongly, with no changes for its employees, readers or business partners," Hinds said.

He said the debt restructuring plan is the US signals a positive and exciting plan which will mean a significant debt reduction which gives the company greater flexibility to roll out new exciting growth and transformative plans in the future.

"Our Asia business continues to be healthy and profitable and is unaffected by the financial restructuring in the US," Hinds said.

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Dumol

N. Korea close to uranium enrichment

SEOUL—NORTH KOREA SAID ON FRIDAY THAT it is in the final stages of enriching uranium, a process that could give the nation a second way to make nuclear bombs in addition to its known plutonium-based program.

North Korea informed the UN Security Council it is forging ahead with its nuclear programs in spite of international calls to abandon its atomic ambitions, the official Korean Central News Agency said in a report early Friday.

The dispatch said plutonium "is being weaponized," and that uranium enrichment—a program North Korea revealed in recent months—was entering the "completion phase."

The US and North Korea's neighbors had been negotiating for years with North Korea to dismantle its plutonium-based nuclear program, which experts say has yielded enough weaponized plutonium for at least half a dozen atomic bombs.

Experts had long suspected that the North also had a covert uranium enrichment program, which would give the regime a second source of nuclear material. North Korea for years denied the claim, but in response to UN sanctions announced in June that it would begin uranium enrichment.

It's easier to build nuclear bombs using enriched uranium than reprocessing plutonium, and uranium can be enriched to relatively low weapons-usable levels better able to evade spy-satellite detection, according to experts in the US and at South Korea's Institute of Nuclear Nonproliferation and Control.

Ukrainian-based hostile may also work without requiring test explosions like the two carried out by North Korea in May and in 2006 for plutonium-based weapons.

However, plutonium bombs have more potential in for countervalued vs ill on top of a missile, one expert, Alan Ortlieb of the Federation of American Scientists, has said.

North Korea is not believed to have mastered making a nuclear bomb small enough to mount in a long-range missile, but April's rocket launch widely condemned by international powers and the UN Security Council was seen by many as a test of its long-range missile technology.

Friday's statement comes amid a series of reconciliatory moves after months of provocation, from the April rocket launch and May nuclear test to the test-firing of a flurry of missiles.

South Korea rallied to action in response to the Security Council's decision to tighten sanctions against the regime in punishment for the May nuclear test, a resolution KCNA called a "wanton violation" of the country's sovereignty.

The US, China, Japan, Russia and South Korea have been trying for years to persuade North Korea to dismantle its nuclear programs in exchange for much-needed aid and other concessions. Pyongyang walked away from the talks earlier this year. AP

Indonesia quake death toll now 63

CIANJUR, INDONESIA—RESCUERS IN INdonesia continued digging on Friday to reach dozens buried by a major earthquake that killed at least 63 people as anger mounted at the slow response from authorities.

Police and troops cleared boulders and mounds of earth in the village of Cilangkahang south of the capital Jakarta, to a hostile bid to reach those trapped following Wednesday's 7.0-magnitude quake, officials said.

"At least 63 people have been killed throughout Java[...] 33 are still trapped in Cilangkaneng," disaster management agency spokesperson Priyadi Kardono said.

The quake, which struck off the south coast of Java, triggered a landslide in the village 150 km south of Jakarta that stripped hillsides bare and buried entire families.

"We've been using heavy machinery for the rescue effort, "Kardono said, after earlier attempts were hampered by poor access, forcing rescuers to pick through the rubble with bare hands, axes and improvised tools.

"They're buried under boulders so the chances of any of the trapped people surviving is very slim," he said.

Powerful quake, which caused a panicked rush from swaying buildings to Jakarta, was spread throughout Indonesia's most island of Java. In four 10,000 homes had been damaged and 3,000 people displaced, officials said.

In the village of Cijanana in West Java province, 120 km from the capital, hundreds of residents whose homes were destroyed set up a makeshift camp in rice-growing fields.

Saryati, a 71-year-old villager, said locals had received little help from the government or aid organizations.

The only assistance to have arrived came a day after the quake, she said.

"The Red Cross handed here some on the day of the disaster. Although we have received rice, we still need more medical supplies," she said.

"I have lost my house. That's the only thing that I have," she said, in tears.

In Gekdon village in the nearby district of Sukabumi, 300 km from the capital, village chief Ahmat Sumpiyadi said locals were having trouble finding shelter as they waited for outside assistance.

"The mosque, which could have been our shelter during the night, has been destroyed. And there is only a small tent for all 28 families in the village," Sumpiyadi said. AFP

Swine flu virus kills 2,837

GENEVA—SWINE FLU HAS KILLED AT least 2,837 people but is not causing more severe illness than previously and the virus has not mutated, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Friday.

The WHO is carefully monitoring the virus in detail any mutations which might signal that it has become more deadly.

"There is no sense that the virus has mutated or changed in any sense," WHO spokesperson Gregory Hartl told a news briefing.

"We are continuing to see increased number of deaths because we are seeing more, many more cases."

About a quarter of a million cases have been laboratory-confirmed worldwide, but this is far fewer than the true number according to the United Nations agency which has stopped requiring countries to report individual cases.

A WHO weekly statement on the latest deaths, commonly known as swine flu, is expected later on Friday. The agency's previous update of Aug. 28 showed at least 2,185 deaths. Reuters

Upsets highlight US Open / A27

SPORTS
Editor Teddyboy S. Molinedo • Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa

China's Li, Fu oust crack Finnish pair

Orcollo-Alcano fighting for last q'final berth

THE highly regarded German team of Thorsten Hohmann and Ralf Souquet ponder their next shot against the Finnish/Asher step kass, 8-4.

By Cudell P. Topic

FORMER CHAMPIONS LI HOWEN AND Fu Jianbo of China made the most out of the winner-break format to handle out Finland's Mika Immonen and Markus Juvonen, 9-5, yesterday and become the second Asian pair in the quarterfinals of the Pantyczanin Xet World Cup of Pool at the SM City North Annex in Quezon City.

In a rematch of the 2007 final which the Chinese won, Li and Fu completed their breaks and moved to forge an intriguing duel against reigning champions Rodney Morris and Shane Van Boening of the United States, who advanced Thursday night.

The quarterfinal matches begin at 2 p.m. today.

The Filipino tandem of Dave "Bata" Reyes and Francisco "Django" Bustamante secured a quarterfinal berth with an 8-5 victory over Italy late Thursday night.

They will meet England's Darren Appleton and Imran Majid, who upped Spain's David Alcaide and Rafael Garzon, 8-6, last night in a match that will be remembered more for Alcaide's show of sportsmanship.

With the match tied at 6, Alcaide, after being the last 3 admitted to an infraction which referee Cielo Lopez missed, giving the English pair an open table before sealing the match two racks later.

Dennis Orcollo and Ronnie Alcano, who form RP's Team A, were battling Russia at presstime with the winner advancing opposite Poland for a place in the semifinals of the Scotch double tournament making $60,000 to the champion.

Save for the nail-biting victory of the Chinese pair, though, it was a frustrating day for Asia, which was down to just three teams as Japan and powerhouse Chinese-Taipei fell by the wayside against talented European pairs.

The Japanese pair of Satoshi Kawahara and Hayato Hijikata was down the door by the Dutch duo of Nick Bijker and Nick Van den Berg, who cruised to unchallenged 9-4 triumph.

Bijker and Van den Berg will have their hands full in the quarterfinals against Germany's former world champions Ralf Souquet and Thorsten Hohmann, who ousted Poland, 8-4, also yesterday.

The Taiwanese tandem of Ong Ching-chun and Lai Chia-hsiang absorbed a 4-8 beating from Polish standouts Radoslaw Babica and Mieczyslaw Szolgowski.

The Chinese sailed early 8-2, against their Finland foe but seized the last four racks behind two breaks from Fu that led to victory.

Kinnunen, a former world 9-ball king, circumvented to the break 7 in the fifth rack, pocking the Chinese to the ball.

WORLD AM

Suarez ups RP boxers' slate to 3-1

By Rocair Trinidad

MILAN—LITTLE KNOWN CHARLY Suarez sparkled with a fireball conquest of a tall and game Romanian for Thursday and showed everybody in the XV World Amateur Boxing Championships how what Philippine boxing is all about.

The dusky cool-faced college dropout from Bacolor City in Pampanga del Norte dazzled, swiped and scored with two-fisted counters, very much like a devilish bandit decimate who kept his wraks well covered.

The result was a balanced 10-5 victory of favorite Gheorghe Ilian Stoia, a rangy veteran who, although three inches taller than Suarez, was lucky to have landed his one piece.

It was thus for the most sensational stand by a Filipino fighter, and Suarez's display of guts and skills boosted the morale of the Philippine team.

The elusive Suarez, who dropped out

PREMIUM AT ITS UNUSUAL BEST.

First, the new Volvo XC60 AWD comes with City Safety as standard, making it the first and only car in the world with the ability to stop itself. This laser-based preventive safety technology can sense an impending collision at speeds of up to 30 kph. Good news for you, your passengers and – not least – anyone in the car in front of you.

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ABUELAS: Facing court suit

New twist in Japeth's stunning turnaround

By Musong R. Cuerdo

THERE'S ANOTHER COMMITMENT Japeth Aguilar supposedly neared his back on.

Two high-profile businessmen are ready to take the controversial 6-foot-9 center to court if he refuses to honor a contract he signed some years back that makes Abroad Sports Management his agent.

Jourdan Monteverde, son of Regal Films matriarch Lily, and Edgar Tan, owners of the agency that also handles the careers of James Yap and Arwind Santos, among others, said Aguilar signed the contract while in high school in Laguna.

The 19-year-old, which Aguilar signed with his mother Josie and witnessed by a brother of Japeth's father Peter, is still binding, according to Tan, who said that they will pursue the case in court if the cager refuses to recognize them.

"We are upset, of course," Tan told the Inquirer. "Things shouldn't have developed the way they did. It's gotten out of control. He's getting all the wrong advice. Everyone going here (this city) has lost."

"Our lawyers are already reviewing what legal action we can take."

Tan said that they felt "insulted" when Aguilar held a press conference recently where the player said that he had no representation. Tan said that his group was responsible for taking Aguilar from Batangas to the Big City to play ball, and later on to money.

"Napakiya kami dito (we felt embarrassed) because he left Ateneo to go to Western Kentucky," Tan added.

Tan said that those figures rallied to him when Aguilar went all the way to the Philippines before the Jones Cup, asking him to rescind their agreement.

The agent said that they never acceded to the request.

Japeth has become the talk of the basketball town for cutting his back on those wing, solely drafted him as the fifth No. 1 pick overall two months ago.

Easy sailing for SBC, JRU

Lions rip Altas; Bombers top Chiefs

By Cedrik P. Tupaz

DEFENDING CHAMPION SAN BEDA AND last year's runner-up Jose Rizal humiliated over lopsided victories yesterday to firm up their grip on the second and third semifinal slots of the 80th NCAA basketball tournament at the FIBA Filipinas Sports Arena in San Juan.

The Lions banked on tenacious rookie Sudan Daniel and Garvo Lanete to topple Perpetual Help, 86-66, while the Bombers rode a mighty fourth quarter for an 86-74 dumping of Final Four hopeful AutoSans University.

John Wilmar strengthened his bid for the league's top individual award as he notched 20 points and 12 rebounds to help the Bombers secure their 11th victory in 12 starts.

The 6-foot-8 Daniel bulled his way to 17 points that went with eight rebounds and four blocks as the Lions roared to their 11th straight win and 12th overall.

San Beda is one more win shy of matching its longest winning streak of 14 games it registered in 2006.

Lanete fired 13 points and grabbed a career-high 12 rebounds for the Lions, who can clinch a Final Four berth with a victory over the Cheetahs on Wednesday.

The loss knocked the Altas out of Final Four contention. Perpetual has just three wins to show in 10 starts, joining the group of schools, including Angeles University Foundation, Filipinas and Pacific, that made Colleges.

In junior action, San Beda walloped Perpetual Help, 103-80, to keep second place with a 12-3 record, while Jose Rizal trounced Arellano, 90-78.

JOSE Rizal's Cameroonian standout Mohamed Kigbo goes for a reverse against John Tay tangling at Arellano's Ayala Pinto

Archers try to stay alive vs Tamaraws

By Jasmine W. Payo

LA SALLE FIGHTS to stay alive again, this time taking on a much tougher foe in the Eastern U in the UAAP men's basketball tournament today.

"It's going to be hard," admitted La Salle coach Franz Pumaren. "It's still double, but it's not without some control already."

The Green Archers are still in contention for the last Final Four berth solely a 58th-seeding 3-7 record...go up against the Tamaraws as overwhelming underdogs in the 4 p.m. battle at the FIBA Filipinas Arena in San Juan.

A win would push the Archers just half a game behind the University of Santo Tomas Tigers, who hold fourth place at 6-4.

If the Archers lose, they still have a chance to stay in contention if the Tigers stumble due provided they win their final assignment and the Tigers drop their last two games.

But coach Glenn Capacio stressed that the game also remains important for the Tamaraws, who at 10-2 need only to win one of their last two games to nail the remaining Final Four berth.

The Ateneo Blue Eagles, perched atop with an 11-1 card, have earlier the first twice-to-beat semifinal advantage.

"We don't want to drop out of the top two, as we have to work hard both on offense and defense against La Salle," said Capacio.

University of the East, which secured the third semifinal slot, takes on the eliminated Nationalist University at 2:30 p.m.

The Tigers missed the opportunity to complete the Final Four seat when the Archers pulled off a 68-64 escape in their crucial duel last Thursday.

DONAIRE: 40 degrees

Donaire recovering from dengue fever

WORLD BOXING ASSOCIATION (WBA) Interim super flyweight champ Nonito Donaire is recovering from a frightening bout with dengue fever that put him in the hospital with a 40°C temperature, his manager told The Associated Press yesterday.

Donaire fell ill on Wednesday a month after returning from Las Vegas, where he defeated Rafael Concepcion for the WBA's interim 115-pound title.

His American manager, Cameron Dunkin, says a regimen of intravenous fluids helped to reduce the fighter's fever, which dropped to 39°C on Thursday after climbed above 40. Donaire appears healthy enough so he released yesterday.

Donaire's wife, Rachel, said the boxer likely contracted the fever from a mosquito bite.

Donaire was rescued at the Asian Hospital in Alabang, Muntinlupa.

Donaire (22-1, 14 KOs) was the IBF flyweight champion before moving up to 115 lb. He hasn't ruled out plans his next fight in March 2011, most notably knocking out Yo Sin-chinyan to claim the IBF 112-lb title.

Donaire and his wife Jennifer remain in the country for another month, Dunkin said. AP

SPORTSWATCH

QC Int'l 42K listing opens

THE REGISTRATION BOOST FOR THE First Quezon City International Marathon opens on Sept. 11, setting into high gear an event expected to see almost 10,000 runners for the Oct. 18 event.

The marathon highlights Quezon City's 29th founding anniversary. The event will feature 10K, 10K and 21.1K events.

About P3 million in cash and other prizes will be at stake in all five race distances. Finishers' medals will be given to 21K and 42K runners.

Runners may register at any Tower stores. Other registration centers include the Ride Park, Bonifacio High School, Tapinac City, and Bonifacio Hotel, Teachers Village, Diliman Quezon City.

M'weather-Marquez on Sky

SINGABLE SEASON PASS WILL TELEGRAM fans and entertainment the "Number One Movie Star, Megastar vs Filipino" fight on Sept. 20 from 6 a.m. The exclusive pay-per-view service is available in Skycable digital subscribers in Metro Manila and Philippine cable analog subscribers in the Camarines area. For inquiries, call 912 0000.

Pacquiao Cup fires off at SJC

A BANNER CROWD IS EXPECTED AT SJC Juan Gutierrez shooting range for the inaugural Pacquiao Shooters Cup 6 Clay Target tilt, luring more than 80 quality lights.

Boxing superstar Manny Pacquiao is hosting the event with Fric Pineda, president of MP Promotions.

Pacquiao's friends who will field their choice slugs include Patrick Antonio, Undersecretary Chavit Singson, Boy Reyes, Ruben Bakal, SJC owner Rodolfo Pineda, Pino Alba Reyes, Boy Jalandoni, Rio Gallardo, Sonny Ligon, lawyer Jong Sosa, Arman Sumbo, Bobbit Paz, Sam Menendez, Joe Tipacio and Ramon Manzanares.

'Balik-Makati' coolfest today

THE "BALIK MAKATI" SWEETCHAIN ONE Coolfest, a four special floodlight exhibits at 1 p.m. today at the Makati Coliseum.

Due to the big number of entries, expected to reach 200, flights will be held until 12 noon, said Hugo Kriger and Alice Bolivia.

The winners will receive P4-5,000 for an entry fee of P1,000.

Jackpot prizes are P50,000 for the 100-lapped entry champ, P12,000 for the handler and P12,000 for the pacer.

The fastest are champ gets P50,000 and a 29-inch Sanyo color TV.

What's it all about, Charly?

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

* * *

"A punching machine, pa rin, walkie," explained coach Gaspi.

"A two-fisted boxer," told Joe Asaytono, veteran Filipino scribe covering this tournament for People's Journal.

For the record, Suarez reported here with nothing more than the 2005 National Open featherweight title to show.

However, he would next specify that he came here with the hope of bringing home his fourth crown in the 2007 World Boxing Championships in Chicago.

* * *

In that tournament, he lost by a single point to a talented Mongolian star and was promptly booted out.

Yes, he came out of the pool of vitriolic criticism or anything of that sort.

All he wanted to show was that he could fight a lot better than the wild boxer who lost in his first bout in Chicago.

* * *

It's funny now how Suarez suppressed himself with a conquest of a tall, tough Romanian foe on Thursday.

The victory was so sensational and significant Nicky Vargas, president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines, readily hosted a Chinese dinner in this hotel of the central place.

* * *

During dinner, Suarez could only stare and smile shyly whenever he was asked how he did it.

Who inspired him to take up boxing?

Strength?

What was the work of your father?

Strength?

When was your favorite boxer before you started in the amateurs?

Mike Tyson.

* * *

Now, please don't get me wrong.

This is not to say Charly Suarez, a penniless boy who has gone on to see the world, is the future of Philippine boxing.

That's history.

In fact, Suarez could next more his mouth in the tough featherweight division here.

Of course, the story of Charly Suarez, for now is how a poor kid who had to drop out of school showed what stuff the Filipino is made of.

For one shining moment last Thursday, Charly Boy showed the world what the Filipino is all about.

HIGH HOOPS: Junior basketball action heats up at the 2009 Hilo Best Center Powerade MCR tournament semifinals unfolds on Sept. 5 at the Xavier High School Gym in Greenhills.

San Juan's high-school-level competition resumes 2 p.m. on Sunday as the defending MCR Powerade champion Le Salle Junior Greens declares go up against the Xavier Stallions for a berth in the regional finals. The San Beda Red Cubs tangle with the Antipolo Lady of Lourdes for the remaining slot in the regional finals at 3:30 p.m.

STI, Lyceum-Subic forge Naascu rubber matches

By Marc Anthony Reyes

STI AND LYCEUM OF SUBIC BAY BOOKED tournaments odds in dream their Final Four rivals yesterday and forge playoff matches for the next championship slots of the National Athletic Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (Naascu) basketball tournament.

The STI Olympians wrestled behind their collegiate Filipino peers to stop the University of Manila Hawks, 70-58, while the 1SB Sharks conquered the San Sebastian College Recoletos of Cavite Barons in overtime, 76-72, at the San Juan gym.

Staying alive only because of their twice-to-beat incentives as top semifinalists, the Sayson and Del Mundo six to get back in their unexpected tournament, on Monday to administer all matches set in the Pinoy Sports Complex.

Jesse James Collado unleashed 10 points for the Sharks, who played steadily in the entire period after regulation ended at 66-all.

STI, a Sharks in the last two seasons, held 1.M to eight points in the first quarter while posting to 23 and surged tremendously times Dean Gloria.

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Que keeps fine form, fires 69 in Euro golf

CRANS-SUR-SIERRE, SWITZERLAND — Angelo Que sustained his fine form by firing a 2-under-par 69 in the first round of the European Masters here Thursday.

Fresh from powering his partnership with rival friend Marc Pucay to a runners-up finish in the World Cup in November, Que joined a 36-man league for 17th place with scores of 33-36 at the par 71 Crans-sur-Sierre Golf Club course.

The 2008 Philippine Open champion built his record on a sizzling front nine where he birdied four holes (1, 4, 6 and 9) against a bogey on No. 3.

Former winner Brett Rumford recovered from an unnerving start to charge into the lead by one stroke over Wilm Simon Dyson with a 63 to the $1.6 million tournament in the Swiss Alps which is co-sanctioned with the Asian Tour.

The 32-year-old Australian won his tee shot into the crowd at the first hole and struck a female spectator.

Murakami falters

Although 37 players broke par in the 55th event that's replaced the preferred-lies rule, Antonio Murakami, the only other Filipino in the field, proved a big disappointment as he finished dead last with a 5-over-par 80.

Murakami failed to recover from a disastrous nine on the par 4 No. 4 that left him with a 43 on the front nine. He seemed certain to retain the harrowing run Friday.

Shaken by the incident with the spectator, Rumford slipped to two over par by the fifth before settling off nine birdies and an eagle in the next 13 holes.

"I looked my drive right and my ball hit the lady right on the bridge of her eye and she was taken to hospital," Rumford told reporters.

"I felt really bad about it. They took her off her treatment before I actually got to see her but I got a report on the second hole.

"At that point I wasn't thinking a nine-under score was on the cards but momentum started swinging in the right direction and I got the putts starting to fall," added Rumford.

Tournament favourite Lee Westwood got off to a slow start, shooting a 71. Reuters

MARIA Sharapova, the 2006 champion, stretches for a return to Christina McHale during day four of the 2009 US Open.

Upsets highlight US Open

Dementieva, Jankovic stumble; Roddick advances

IRELAND Dodin celebrates after ousting Russian No. 4 Elena Dementieva. Dodin's victory sets her up for a clash against Sharapova. AFP

NEW YORK — FORMER FINALISTS ELENA Dementieva and Ariana Jankovic were eliminated in successive surprises in Arthur Ashe Stadium at the US Open on Thursday.

Blinking back tears and ignoring pain, Argentine teenager Melanie Oudin defeated No. 4-seeded Elena Dementieva, 6-3, 6-4, 6-1.

Then No. 5 Ariana Jankovic lost, 6-3, 6-7 (3), 7-6 (8), to Slovakian Dominika Cibulkova in a 2 hour 40 minute match. Jankovic reached the final in 2008, but she said she wasn't focused on this day. Her grandmother died on Wednesday.

"I was very sad and emotionally I was really not on court," Jankovic said. "I really tried my best to be there mentally to play, but it was really hard."

The losses by Dementieva and Jankovic mean half of the top 20 seeded women are out of the draw. No. 22 Sabine Lisicki of Germany also is gone, having left to cram in the van ride en route to a wheelchair after injuring her ankle at the end of a 6-3, 3-6, 7-5 defeat against Australian Sudanese of Australia.

No. 1 Dinara Safina nearly joined the parade of surprising exits, turning in her second poor performance of the week before hanging on to edge 67th-ranked Kristina Barrois of Germany, 6-7 (5), 6-2, 6-3.

"Another tough day in the office," said Safina, who double-faulted 13 times, including three in the tiebreaker. "There is no problem in the technique or nothing. Just in my head."

No seeded men lost Thursday, when the winners included 2009 runner-up Novak Djokovic and five-time champ No. 5 Andy Roddick. No. 21 James Blake, No. 22 Juan Querrey, 55th-ranked John Isner and 127th-ranked Jesse Witten.

Roddick, the 2003 US Open champion and 2006 runner-up, beat Marc Gicquel of France, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4, at night and now takes on the 6-foot-9 Isner.

French Open runner-up Robin Soderling advanced when his opponent, Marcel Granollers, quit during the third game with a back injury.

Djokovic cruised by Australian qualifier Carsten Ball, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4. Also advancing were No. 8-seeded Nikolay Davydenko, No. 10 Fernando Verdasco and No. 14 Tommy Robredo of Spain; No. 15 Radek Stepanek of the Czech Republic and No. 28 Tommy Haas of Germany.

On the women's side, 2004 champion Svetlana Kuznetsova, No. 9's Caroline Wozniacki of Denmark, No. 13 Nadia Petrova of Russia, No. 25 Zheng Jie of China and No. 29 Sorana Cirstea of Romania progressed. No. 19 Flavia Pennetta, No. 30 Alona Bondarenko of Ukraine lost.

Oudin, aged 17 and ranked 70th, played most of the third set with a heavy wrap on her left thigh, while cramps briefly reduced her to tears as she bended in the baseline in unrest.

"First time playing on Arthur Ashe, I was hearing No. 4 in the world, about to beat her," Oudin said. "Just a little bit of everything. A lot of things were going through my mind."

She set up a third round match against 2006 champion Maria Sharapova, who eliminated another 17-year-old American, Christina McHale, 6-2, 6-1, at night.

Looking ahead to facing Oudin, Sharapova said: "I definitely have to go out there and expect her to play some of her best tennis."

"I mean, I've got a tough round ahead of me. Also miserably that I've never played against before, someone that's going to come out and, I'm sure, she's going to swing and have nothing to lose — which she doesn't." AP

S. Pablo, Dumaguete races wrap up Milo 21K elims

MILO MARATHON NATIONAL FINALS AS-pirants have one last Sunday for a chance to dethrone reigning champions Ednaverde Bienvenida and Mercedita Manipol Pitalveras as the 21K-eliminations legs come to a close tomorrow in San Pablo and Dumaguete.

Close to 9,000 runners are competing in the 3Mile while 9,000 signed up for the Dumaguete elimination, the 2500 and 2000 legs, respectively.

As in previous races, the top three male runners must beat the 1:13:00 qualifying time while the female winners must not finish beyond 1:35:00 to make the 42K national finals slated Oct. 11 in Manila.

The top three runners will win P30,000, P6,000 and P4,000 and all expenses paid trips to Manila if they meet the qualifying standard.

Only the cities of Santiago in Isabela and Tagbilaran in Bohol did not produce finalists.

Qualifiers will compete for the P75,000 top prize and the honor of succeeding Bienvenida and Manipol, who will both see action in the Incumbent Southeast Asian Games in Laos.

Aside from the 21K elimination race, other events at stake are 10K, 5K and the 3K fun run.

Eric Pantoja, Bro. Alejandro and Leon Rosero were the latest runners to advance to the finals. Ronilo L. Asuncion

Samboy's daughter soars

JANE CHRISTINE RODRIGUEZ DEL THE daughter of PBA legend Samboy Lim, won the gold medal in the girls' karate 12 to 13 age division of the 18th IOS Kanto Model Cup recently in the Southern Peninsular to Cantonk, Malaysia.

Lim, whose mother is lawyer Lolet Rodriguez-Lim, also won a silver in the 12-13 mixed team karate event and a bronze in the 12-13 girls kata event.

She is a member of the Association for the Advancement of Karatedo (AAK) Town Philippines.

More than 300 athletes from all over the world participated in the championships.

Suarez ups RP pugs' ... From page B-21

of a consecutive course in third year, raised the five-man RP team's record to 3-1 record in that scoring tournament, the strongest start by a national boxing contingent in recent memory.

Light welterweight Genchert Bauzdo was to fight Brazil's Mahe Carballo late Friday hoping to improve on his fourth round in the preliminaries.

Aran Tipon, winner over a vastly improved Sri Lankan in the first round, faces a grizzled Algerian punching machine on Saturday.

But all eyes are on two-time Olympian Henry Tabanao who debuts against Stephanous Daniolpos, a combative Armenian, also on Saturday after dressing a bye in the first round.

Jane Irish, favored to be Sunday's pregnant in the Mediterranean Games where Suarez, 23, will go for his second win in another bold bid against an even taller opponent in the lanky Jun Min-jae of South Korea, who could be five inches taller than the 5-foot-3 Filipino lad.

Suarez, in only his second big international outing, got a rude welcome — a stiff weight to the face after the first bell. Stunned, he countered to even up at 1-all only to get caught by another straight to the face to fall behind again.

With the count at 2-all, Suarez stalked, flashed and, marble eyes flaring, dug in with fiery combinations to take a 4-2 lead.

Suarez was both sharp and fearless in the second round. After feeling his range, he neared and blasted his opponent with machine-gun explosions, scoring two back-to-back points within a second, to take the round, 12-5.

Suarez later threw a victorious punch into the air to celebrate his victory.

But even before that, amazed fans had stopped wondering what sort of boxers are mined in the poor country where the superstar Manny Pacquiao comes from.

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SPORTS

Baguio training for 'fit' Pacman

By Roy Luarca

MANNY PACQUIAO HAS CROSSED COOL Baguio City over the rugged terrain of Tuba-o, Mankayo, in his training base for his showdown with Miguel Cotto on Nov. 14 in Las Vegas.

Before Fernandez, Pacquiao's buddy and dual Filipino trainer, is already scouring the country's summer capital for a suitable venue where the ground for pound-for-pound king will start his fight buildup after Sept. 14.

Pacquiao and Cotto will vie for the United States welterweight title in Vegas.

Eating souvenir of chief trainer Freddie Roach about preflight chinwaggings, Pacquiao announced his choice of Baguio as training site during yesterday's press conference held in honor of IBF light flyweight champion Brian Viloria at the Crowne Plaza Galleria in Ortigas.

Viloria beat Mexican challenger Juan Uribe by unanimous decision Saturday to U-Korakuen.

At the same time, Pacquiao and partner Solar Entertainment Corp. announced the formation of a company that will promote and manage Filipino boxers overseas.

Pacquiao opted not to make it Roach's Wild Card Gym in Hollywood because he is nursing the limit of his unannounced allowable wing as a non-US resident, in the meantime.

Under the Substantial Presence Test, Pacquiao, if he stays beyond the limit, would have to pay taxes based on his earnings worldwide.

Pacquiao assured his fans, who had been clamoring for him to start training early, that he knows from experience how much time he needs to prepare for a fight.

"When I train for nine weeks or even days over eight weeks, my conditioning isn't that good," Pacquiao said to Filipinos. "It's the same when I train for less than eight weeks."

Asked about his hectic schedule, Pacquiao said he knows how to pace himself, adding he's still fit at 130 pounds.

"When I train, I punish myself," he said. "I make it a point to do three to four rounds everyday even though the fight is only for 12."

Solar CEO Peter Cayabyab said they would help in the production, promotion and distribution of boxing fights of Filipinos overseas.

Thanksgiving, as requested by Solar president and CEO Wilson Tieng, said the operation of the yet-to-be-named outfit will be distinct from Pacquiao's MP Promotions. *With a report from Ronnie Principe, Contributor*

IBF LIGHT flyweight champ Brian Viloria (left) gamely rubs shoulders with Manny Pacquiao. At right is Solar CEO Wilson Tieng. *photo by Jason Quibilan*

TRANSFORMATION Secretary Leandro Mendoza (on extreme right), who is also president of the National Golf Association of the Philippines, greets jungoll champ and Golf Personality of the Year Carlos Philippe Palanca Jr. during the 1-opening of the 14th Philippine International Golf Show at the SMX Convention Center at the Mall of Asia. Also shown are officers of the Golf Distributors Association of the Philippines, from left (VP for internal affairs Glenn Barrera, Calixtus chair Ed Mendoza, VP external Raymund Arevalo and president Butch Hidalgema.

Palanca, Legaspi feted at golf show

THE GOLF DISTRIBUTORS association of the Philippines yesterday opened the three-day 14th Philippine International Golf Show with thousands of golf enthusiasts trooping to the SMX Convention Center at the Mall of Asia.

Local distributors of the world's major brands such as Adam's Golf, Callaway Golf, Dunlop, Maxfort, Mizuno, Nike Golf, PING, Taylormade, Titleist and Wilson have banded together to promote the sunrise of this year's down.

There will be the usual price discounts on equipment and accessories, as well as side events.

Yesterday, the GDAP honored pargolfers Philippe Palanca Dalaca and Chan Kimlin Legaspi for their achievements during the opening rites where Trampanoo vice secretary and National Golf Association president Leandro Mendoza was the guest of honor.

Dalaca won the US Kids Golf Champion Championship in Portland in June while Legaspi won the recent 2009 Optimist International Junior Golf Championships in Florida and the US Kids World Championship in California.

The show opens at 10 a.m. and closes at 6 p.m. Admission is free.

Sonsona goes for WBO super 'fly' crown today

FILIPINO CHALLENGER Mark Sonsona was just half a pound over the limit on the eve of his championship date with WBO super flyweight king Jose Lopez of Puerto Rico today in Ontario, Canada.

With the official weigh-in set in the morning of the fight, Sonsona's handlers are confident the young Filipino fighter would easily meet the division's limit of 115 lb.

"Mark is still young and losing weight will not be severe," said trainer Ronnie Dionisio, 38.

Only 19, the 5-foot-7 Sonsona (13-0, 12 knockouts) is hoping to become the second youngest Filipino world champion after former light welterweight king Manny Pacquiao who won the WBC crown at age 19 years and one month. Sonsona turned 20 last July.

The 29-year-old Lopez (19-7-2, 10 knockouts) remains a slight favorite over Sonsona, born in General Santos, the city Manny Pacquiao calls home. *Ronnie Principe, Contributor*

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Housing group asserts role in nat'l recovery

By Charlie E. Baker

WITH ITS FORTHCOMING national convention, the largest organization of subdivision and housing developers in the Philippines is reasserting itself in playing a key role in the country's economic recovery.

"The country's housing data show the property market is holding up well amid the global economic turmoil. This only shows how the Subdivision and Housing Developers Association could take an active role in promoting national recovery," said Damian Chua, national president of SHDA.

He said that considering that SHDA is composed of the country's top real estate developers—Ayala Land, Vista Land, Robinsons Land and Filinvest among them—the group has the ability to establish its authority as the most influential real estate development organization in the country.

"Right now, there's a double-digit growth in the number of projects, much better than last year when construction prices were too high. Imagine if we are able to sustain and even improve these figures," Chua said.

He explained that the housing sector is composed of various segments catering to various financial capabilities of Filipino families: P450,000 for medalyad housing; P481,000 to P950,000 for economic housing; P951,000 to P5 million for low-cost housing; and above P5 million for the "upper market" including middle income and high-end segments.

"All these sectors are exhibiting satisfactory figures at the moment and as we hold our national convention, we will push our members to do more considering that housing has a high multiplier effect on the economy," Chua said.

He said housing has a multiplier effect of 14.6:1 ratio, meaning that for every P14 billion worth of housing units, it will contribute a total of P146 billion of economic activity for the country.

"It has been observed that poverty incidence starts to subside during episodes of high construction activities," said Iluminado Alonzo, SHDA national chair. "And that we will intend to emulate in the coming months and years."

Alonzo said the national convention slated on Sept. 17 to 18 at the Hotel Theni Manila Hotel will invite some of the country's leaders in the housing sector.

"The event will be very significant as Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (Hurc), Vice President Noli de Castro, will discuss the national stimulus package in his keynote address while Angelo Sta. Ana, officer in charge of the National

(SEEMORE B2-4)

SCIENCE/HEALTH

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Editor Cesar G. Pangalangan

KEEPING YOURSELF YOUNG

Follow the 'food signs' to avoid toxin pileups

By Tessa R. Salazar

HOW DO YOU KEEP YOURself young, healthy and vibrant in a competitive world replete with environmental toxins and glamorous temptations?

In fact world's millions of boomer telemarketers, nutrition consultant Phyllis A. Balch discussed the importance of colorful fruits and veggies, and carbonate, in preventing premature aging.

This time, biochemistry, molecular and nutritional oncology specialist Dr. Romulo de Villa shares his own "traffic lights of nutrition"—a list of foods and processing methods that people in all countries should either stop, go slow on, or be ready to run away from every day.

Dr. De Villa is the dean of the Postgraduate Program in Integrated Oncology Medicine at the Manila Central University.

The **stop** category refers to foods and processing methods that are either rich in toxins (such as chemicals and toxins), or that which generate damaging chemicals.

The **caution** category refers to foods that have a moderate amount of man-made chemicals and toxins or that the chemicals and toxins could be avoided by choosing an alternative processing method.

The **go** category refers to foods with the least amount of man-made chemicals and toxins and processing methods that leave them devoid or relatively devoid of extra toxins.

Here they are, your diet traffic signs:

Red

• Stop consuming pork and pork products (such as lunchoy, tocino, longanisa, bacon and others).

• Stop eating crabs, shellfish and shrimps.

Yellow

• Caution, or reduce the consumption of beef.

• Caution, or reduce consumption of chicken.

Green

• Go eat more fish except fish from fish farms with pellets, and dried seafood.

• Go drink full cream pasteurized milk (but only from grass-fed cows).

• Go eat non-boiled eggs (but only from native-organic chickens).

• Go eat a variety of fruit, raw fruits and vegetables.

• Go eat a variety of whole grains cereals.

• Go eat a variety of beans, nuts and legumes.

And here is your processing traffic sign:

Red

• Stop frying (which produces fatal peroxides).

• Stop baking (which produces acrylamides).

Yellow (prepare to stop)

• Caution, or reduce broiling and grilling.

• Caution, or exhaust microwaving in plastic.

Green

• Go for steaming.

• Go for boiling.

• Go for cooking in coconut milk (gata).

• Go for cooking in clay pots.

Pioneer health inventor Dr. Jaime Galvez Tan, on the other hand, urges consuming vegetables raw or as salad or pickled, fruits of all kinds eaten fresh or taken as fruit juice.

He most avoided foods are animal meat (meat, pork, chicken); especially processed meats, canned meats and milk products like butter, clarified butter (ghee), kefir, yogurt, cheeses, ice cream, cream and ice cream.

Tan's other most avoided foods are trans fats or hydrogenated vegetable oil, foods fried in corn oil or corn oil or hydrogenated vegetable oil, processed foods like white sugar, refined flour or processed grains. Watch out for those fried oils when you next snack on boardwalk and junk foods.

Baby allergies

MEDICAL FILES

Rafael Castillo, M.D.

ALLERGY FOR ADULTS IS A SOURCE of much curiosity, and it becomes more so in babies and young children. Yes, allergy is not a problem only to adults—a popular misconception. In babies with puffy eyes and runny nose may already be suffering from allergy. Infants may be born with exemptions such as recurrent abdominal colic or regurgitations of milk, which entitles the parents see the doctor may attribute to allergy.

Dr. Peter Smith, a pediatrician-allergist, aged from Griffith and Bond University in Australia, was recently in the country to exercise on the various causes of allergy in infants and the steps that can protect an infant from the discomfort and danger that allergies can bring.

Dr. Smith defines allergy as "an abnormal response of the body to a foreign protein, which can be something we breathe in, something we eat, or something we're doing with, like an insect sting."

Food allergies, in particular, affect anywhere from 5 to 8 percent of infants, and health experts are alarmed that the rates have been rising in recent years. Cow's milk protein is often the first and most common of food allergy during infancy. Dr. Smith says. As the child grows and is given many solid foods as protein, such as beef, egg, allergies to eggs, nuts and seafood may also be fairly common.

Allergy symptoms

The symptoms of allergy can be relatively mild initially such as upset stomache or regurgitation but it can also be potentially life-threatening in some cases. These have been reports of occasional anaphylactic shock in babies causing constriction of airways and difficulty of breathing. The baby with anaphylactic shock can just suddenly turn blue, due to lack of oxygen.

So babies of parents with certain allergies have to be should be considered at risk of developing allergic problems also. Dr. Smith explained that if neither parent is allergic. The chance that infant will have allergies is only about 15 percent. An infant with an allergic parent has 40 to 60 percent risk of developing allergy, and if both parents have allergies, the risk goes all the way to 80 percent.

Also an interesting hypothesis (hygiene hypothesis) proposes that limited exposure to bacteria, especially in early life, due to extremely sterile surroundings may also increase the risk of allergy. So, clean environment for the baby is good, but "sterile" course—supposed to be a privilege of urban affluence—may deprive the babies the chance to develop the babies immune system.

A little bit of bacteria and other allergens may positively stimulate the immune response with antibodies being formed by the body itself. This is why some experts including Dr. Smith label some bacteria as "good bacteria." In fact, I believe some milk preparations have already incorporated in their formula some of these good bacteria such as bifidobacteria.

Allergic rhinitis

There is also such a thing as an "allergic month" in infants and children, such that the allergic manifestations may become more in the cold season. It triggers a cascade of other troublesome allergic problems involving the stomach (gastrointestinal tract), skin, nose and lung airways. Close allergy to various substances can attest to that.

For example, 95 percent of those who have egg allergy also develop dust mite allergy. And dust mite is practically present everywhere. Egg allergy is also known to increase the risk of developing skin allergies or eczema rash—in turn many also lead to allergic rhinitis, to the child always have runny nose, sneezing and teary eyes.

Dietary protection vs allergy

The risk of allergy from milk preparations is one strong argument for breastfeeding. Dr. Smith stresses that it still remains as the best and easiest step that can be taken for dietary protection against allergy, regardless of family history. He explained that breast milk provides a naturally hypoallergenic milk protein that significantly reduces the risk of allergy. Also, breast milk contains antibodies and probiotics (live, good bacteria) like bifidobacteria that help strengthen the infant's immune system.

So, unless other medical conditions in the mother and child make breastfeeding not possible, breast milk remains the best source of nutrition for the baby for as long as possible, especially during the first year. When breastfeeding is not possible, pediatricians may consider prescribing an infant formula that is hypoallergenic. Such preparations contain hydrolyzed whey (H.W.) formulas, because the process of hydrolysis makes milk proteins less allergenic. Hydrolysis is a technical process that breaks down cow's milk protein into smaller, gentle particles that are regarded as harmless by the immune system. Ideally, it helps reduce the risk of allergy.

In addition to hypoallergenic infant formula, probiotics are an infant's diet can also significantly decrease the risk for allergy. Dr. Smith suggests. He presented a paper explaining the benefits of probiotics in food allergy prevention. These probiotics can help alleviate the tendency of the baby's immune system to react abnormally to proteins in food and thus help reduce the potential of developing food allergies. Specifically, probiotics have been reported to decrease the chances of developing eczema, which in turn decreases the likelihood of other forms of allergies.

Allergy prevention

Soy formulas or alternative animal formulas like goat, sheep, or mare, have also been proposed for allergy prevention in infants and babies, but currently, there is no good evidence showing that they can prevent the development of allergies.

Omega 3 fatty acids (fish oil) have been shown in some studies to suppress the inflammatory mechanisms associated with allergies; and nutritional supplementation in the mother has been associated with reduced allergic risk such as wheezing in infants. However, this protective effect dissipated by three years of age. Folate is also another nutritional supplement now being studied in the prevention of allergy.

Rather, when parents have significant histories of allergy, they'd be cautioned already as early as possible if they have informed their parents' allergy-prone genes. There are now blood tests using a few cc's of blood to find out the baby's allergic risk. In fact, blood from the infant's umbilical cord can already be sent for testing, so right on day 1, the infant's allergic risk is known.

Allergy is always bad news at any age. Let our infants and babies be spared from it.

AN ELDERLY member of the family needs special attention as well as specific medical requirements.

Looking after the elderly

By Charles E. Bolton

PUTTING A DEDICATED elderly individual in a retirement facility might seem expensive at first glance. But the Espinosa' high regard for traditional values and close family ties.

But times may be changing as lifestyle and financial situations are forcing both spouses including their children to be preoccupied with so many concerns.

And with most members of the household becoming swamped with work or school assignments they soon find it hard to even concentrate when their elderly or sick from for some reason chat.

"The elderly need special attention just as their children were once totally dependent on them for physical and mental support. While a home may be inadequate when it comes to providing them their medical support, whereas, a hospital may be too impersonal for them, our group decided to establish Home Health Care (www.ics.ph)," explained Dr. Mary Jane Villa-Real-Santos, the facility's managing director.

Wellness programs

The team behind HHC specializes in delivering wellness programs and services to the elderly especially those with disability in the comfort of their homes.

The idea, according to Geno, is to help the rest of the family members cope with the situation.

"Elderly individuals even, seeing from a doctor or those with debilitating conditions need special medical attention and a more personalized care. A long hospital stay may not be appropriate. In our case, the HHC would send a professional—a nurse or a caregiver—in a regular basis to provide specific medical attention or even purpose other equipment is needed. We could even give the family members or their informal household caregivers training," Geno explained.

Geno said HHC is composed of multidisciplinary team of physicians, registered nurses, physical therapists, medtechnists/medical technologists and trained caregivers who could provide families and their elderly such a wide range of medical services at the comfort of their homes and at their own convenient time.

Because of the expertise of the people behind HHC, Geno added that they could also cater to other members of the family who are in need medical assistance at home.

"We could even send someone who could provide examination to any individual, group or company who may need vaccinations, among others," Geno assured.

He added that medical professionals affiliated to HHC are located all over the Philippines so they could serve any locale wherever they may be located.

Service

Aside from the fact that we make sure our nurses know what they are doing, we also screen them regarding how patient they are in relating with an elderly individual," Geno said.

We explained that this is important because the elderly could sometimes be too sensitive and need special attention when being treated or rehabilitated.

Geno added that in cases where the family still need to go on vacation or do something that would require them to be away from the house and bringing their elderly or sick and members of the family would be left is impossible, HHC has established a 24-hour residential facility that could provide the elderly homely environment managed by highly trained professionals.

The HHC's senior residential facilities are located at 127 Ascom Extension in Sikatuna Village and at 11 Mt. Meadow St., Filinvest 1, Batasan Hills both in Quezon City.

"HHC's senior residential facilities were built to take the burden off a family's shoulders. By taking them in a step would be one more facility in the land option would be to bring them in any of those two facilities," Geno said.

She informed that the HHC is planning to build additional senior residential facilities in other parts of Metro Manila to better serve the growing number of elderly individuals, which at the moment is pegged at 7 million or almost 8 percent of the country's population.

QUINO (left) leads a team of professionals ready to assist Filipino families.

Housing group asserts role in nat'l recovery

Front page B1-1

Economic and Development Authority's Office of Director General will tackle economic forecast and outlook for 2010 as well as the housing industry and the Philippine economy in general," Alcuaz said.

Other speakers invited are Antonio Abrikosov of the Center for Global Best Practices who will discuss the private sector perspective of the country's economic outlook for housing.

Development Bank of the Philippines' Hello Bonoan, Land Bank of the Philippines' Edward John Reyes, and Allied Bank's Anthony Cua will share some new alternative funding sources for housing while Board of Investment executive director Lucita Reyes will discuss investment priorities and program and incentives for developers.

Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines president and Mandaluyong City Mayor Benhur Abalos will talk on the role of local government units in encouraging housing activities.

Speakers include Philippine Retirement Authority chair Edgardo Aglipay, Civil Service Assistant Commissioner Ariola de Lima, Dr. Napoli Pantaleon-Dobo will discuss housing markets in Manila and Asian countries), Rene De Veyra and Michael Ruud for PagIBIG Fund's Chair and CEO Jaime Bautista, Home Guaranty Corp. president Gonzalo Sengco Jr., and Commissioner Jesselito Ablaza of the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board.

"From this list of guests and speakers, one could see that HMDA is all bent on organizing and nurturing strong partnership with the country's key shelter agencies as well as other government agencies and other institutions concerned with housing. Thus, our members would be better equipped in dealing with their respective concerns," said Manuel Crisostomo, HMDA vice president and this year's convention chair.

Chua added that in recent years, HMDA has played the lead role in advocating Vice President Jr Castro to various housing matters including the conduction of interest rates on housing loans in 2008, the extension of repayment terms to a maximum of 30 years, and an increase in the loan-to-value ratio of the housing unit used as a collateral.

"HMDA gives feedback and inputs from the housing industry practitioners which serve as basis for proposed policy changes, procedures as well as in the formulation/promulgation of executive orders, memorandums circulars, etc. Our members would be very pleased about the programs we have prepared for them in this forthcoming national convention," Chua said.

How to retro-green your house

For a few years PLANNING TO BUILD YOUR DREAM house? Have you considered making it a "green" dream house? If so, then you are on the right track. By building green, you help protect the environment and reap the many benefits of living in a green home.

But what if you can't afford to build a new home and you are stuck with a poorly ventilated energy-guzzling old house? Can you still do something about it?

If such is the case, then perhaps it's time to consider retro-greening your house.

What is retro-greening?

Retro-greening refers to the retrofit, renovation or improvement of a house to make it conform to chemical, acoustic and visual comforts while saving energy and improving the quality of life of the occupants.

A common argument that I normally encounter when researching an old house is, "why not demolish the house and start building a new one from scratch?" While this may seem to be an easy way out, demolishing existing structures is not a green strategy. It means discarding materials that are already installed and replacing them with virgin materials that consumed energy to have produced and transported.

Again, this is not a hard and fast rule. In some cases it is better to demolish and start anew. This is when structural elements are damaged so much and may endanger lives. Another case would be where the existing structure may not be strong enough to support an additional upper level and expansion.

For the vast majority of houses, though, green retrofitting is a viable alternative. This includes structural homes that are irreparable due to their historical value.

What can be done

The first thing to remember is that retro-greening does not necessarily cost an arm and a leg. Forward planning can help keep costs under control if you know what you are trying to accomplish.

• Stick to the basic goals

Green-retrofitting your house aims primarily at reducing your home's energy consumption. It also aims to improve the indoor air quality with respect to temperature and humidity.

Another important goal is the conservation and recycling of water. The 3 Rs of sustainability—reduce, reuse and recycle—apply to both water and materials. Retro-greening can also mean developing the garden or open space around the house to be an eco-garden so it can be a refuge for nature and a good place to have peace and quiet.

• Energy

Let's start with energy efficiency and conservation. This is one of the fastest ways to retro-green your house and also one of the most tangible ways to see the effects of the improvements in your house. As a result you will enjoy the benefits of lower electricity bills.

Lighting takes up around 20 percent of energy bills. Start replacing your incandescent bulbs with energy-saving compact fluorescent lamps or CFLs. This includes replacing those halogen lamps. Not only are those lamps inefficient in the use of energy, they also give off so much heat that room cooling load is needed to counter their effects. Greater benefit can be derived from daytime and outdoor sources to provide light only where, when and in the amount necessary. Task lighting is recommended in areas where reading, writing, cooking and other meticulous works are done.

Check your appliances, too. Refrigerators and air conditioners are the biggest consumers of energy in a typical household and are responsible for up to 60 percent of energy cost. We must climb maintenance and operation costs before purchasing those appliances by reading the Energy Guide labels to compare energy use and efficiency of competing brands.

Is your house properly insulated against heat? There are many types of thermal insulation that you can use for the ceiling or walls all designed to cut down heat and reduce your energy consumption. If your house is made entirely by aluminum, then you can use one of metallized equipment like fans and air conditioners.

For comments or inquiries, email amandadejesus@gmail.com.

BEFORE RETRO-GREENING. windows were fixed and thermal curtains are completely dependent on air-conditioning. Strict windows were also narrow, the house lacked natural light and ventilation.

AFTER RETRO-GREENING. window openings were enlarged and made operable to avoid dependence on air-conditioning. The room design encouraged the flow of natural ventilation and lots of light in daytime.

Spaces for women in the Age . . .

Front page B1-2

huge production spaces that were the generation's kitchens, today's personal kitchen is smaller, better laid out in more or every function, and with the most advanced equipment.

Contemporary kitchen have were is probably the greatest thing that happened to this generation. Today, we can have full pantry lockers with shelves that swing or slide out, deep drawers for large utensils and pots that aren't overwhelmingly big, flip-up cabinet doors that get out of our head's way and other hardware that support kitchen gadgetry like racks and hydraulic platforms for small appliances. All these make the art of cooking are look easier and neat.

There are now the spaces and more indoor spaces...a bedroom or a den—where one can read a good book with soft music or sit to share stillness. A good chaise lounge, massage chair or double sofa give comfort to those moments. And to make the experience even better, mood lighting tops the list of essentials. Floor lamps or accent lights can provide sufficient task lighting while keeping the rest of a room less intense, soothing mood.

For many, this is the start of the creative moments when the mind is quiet and free of clutter.

Space for inspiration

Not to be forgotten is the ultimate space for inspiration: the bathroom. Literally washing off the grime from the day's activities and all the unwanted dirt is our mental and emotional walls, bathrooms have gotten bigger and become more like a relaxation room. While bathtubs are great for lounging up, the shower is just the simplest and most uplifting bathroom appurtenances. The popularity of rainshowers can be credited to the appearance of having small streams of waters softly wash down the body rather than those water in it. With indirect lighting and a choice of lightly-colored tile finishes, the experience can be ethereal.

Creative forces come from within, and when external forces like the perfect space complement it, the possibilities become infinite. And more so during the mid-life when creative juices are most active. The time is for the Age of Confidence.

* * *

The Maryknoll/Miriam College High School Batch of 1984 celebrates its silver jubilee homecoming today at the Miriam College grounds. It's food-tasting, look, "The Age of Confidence" is about the lives of 40 Maryknoll alumnae who nurture have confidence has come into their lives. For inquiries please e-mail mahonedm@yahoo.com.

PROPERTY

Spaces for women in the Age of Confidence

DESIGN DIMENSIONS

Jaclet Berenguer-Asuncion

THEY SAY CONFIDENCE AH-dres at a person's life when the self is transformed from within. For many, this comes at middle-age. It is also the age when this crosses begin to mark the face, hair threads start to turn white and the realities of the aging process throw us into dismissing many false definitions of ourselves and instead, open us up to the many creative forces within. This are otherwise understood as the "Age of Confidence."

These creative forces are best tapped when given a home to flourish. For many, a space at home or at the workplace makes for the creative space where thoughts can grow and change can happen. True to its purpose, the creative space has an reflective characteristic, easily close to personalize an environment that both quiets down and inspires the soul.

Small corner

For some, a small corner is more than enough space for creative endeavors. Decorated with to one's favorite things and inspiring memorabilia, a large enough work surface and a comfortable seat, it is sufficient enough to make the creative juices to flow. In my case, my vanity table, devoid of all decor or accessories, is the special space where I sit for a few moments at the start and the end of the day—with pen in hand instead of a handbrush—to clear my mind and allow quiet inspiration to come and be transformed into tangible art. With materials like laminex, glass and solid surface, my little space is crisp and clean, perfect for starting and ending a day that is usually wrought with the chaos of design materials, colors and a multitude of drawings to look at.

For others, the kitchen is where their imagination runs wild and allows he both skill and self-expression to produce an assortment of gastronomic wonders. Fortunately for this generation, kitchens have advanced into beautiful yet functional workspaces. Unlike the

CONTEMPORARY hardware allow heavy items to be stored in those pantry drawers within doors that close all into a clean and elegant cabinet.

Posh amenities abound at Manhattan Heights

Manhattan Garden City is the first and only transit-oriented development due to connected to the LRT1 and MRT3 lines. The whole metro just got closer.

More than 20 varied amenities, including this lap pool amidst vibrant tropical landscaping, are planned for Manhattan Heights.

Manhattan Heights is the new phase of Manhattan Garden City, the township joint venture project of Megaworld and the Araneta Group.

super LIFESTYLE
style . urban living . pop culture . entertainment . recreation
Editor: Thelma Sioson San Juan
Subeditor: Pam Pastor

Remembering Alexis A. Tioseco (Feb. 11, 1981 - Sept. 1, 2009)

By Quark Honares

"SO," HE SAID, WOLDING IN HIS FIST AS IF he were holding a microphone—"what's your favorite Stanley Kubrick movie?"

I was thinking to myself, "Oh my God. And I thought I was a dork," as I stared to bewilderment at this tall and lanky teenager with short-cropped hair who reached in attractive and yet medically lethal savoir-while talking to me.

He would then follow his older brother Chris around as they interviewed up-and-coming filmmakers for an Inquirer 20s special on new Philippine cinema.

It was the summer of 2001—the first time I met Alexis Tioseco.

After that I'd see him around the 20s offices, since we both became writers for the section. Fellow writers nicknamed him Ardie, since he supposedly resembled an aardvark. Without fail, every time I'd run into him he'd do the same thing. He'd hold his fist up and go,

"Mr. Honares! Top 5 John Hughes films!"

"Mr. Honares! Godfather 1 or 2?"

Mr. Honares! "The Lord of The Rings' is boring! Should you agree or disagree?"

Soon after we became part of a group who would gather in this food arcade in Ortigas every Wednesday to drink beer and talk about cinema and other people (mostly just other People). Since writers are by nature we grew up with the most creative name: The Wednesday Group.

This was where Alexis and I became friends, talking about everything from cinema to who the hottest girl in his then campus (Ateneo) was, to hip-hop music.

Around that time I released my first movie and found it smarting how being the very naive college kid he was, he'd champion it as Erasmus and teenage hounds like HarryPAD and Shaw Berbangs.

Even then you could see how much he loved cinema, writing away and making argument after argument about movies that were read by a total of 18 people.

And then he saw Ian Dan's "Buong Mga Sisi," and his life was changed forever. Watching Lav's opus compressed into his head a life dedicated to furthering and promoting Filipino film.

He wrote to film festivals and critics incessantly, asking them to watch certain movies he felt strongly about. He championed film makers like John Torres, Raya Martin (also a former 20s contributor) and Diamond Gaerlan before they made their first features.

I asked him once why he didn't pursue his dream of becoming a filmmaker. "This is where I can make a real difference," he told me. "There are already so many great filmmakers. Why try to be one of them when I can help make their work known?"

A few years ago Alexis Arbez, Sha Tiburcio,

super

Remembering Alexis ...

"CHRIS Nadeau did," Alexis wrote above Chris posted his photos of him and Nika on Flickr.

ALEXIS shares a goofy moment with Quarto.

(SEE PAGES)

One of the few

By Philip Pacheco

A LITTLE MORE THAN A DECADE AGO, I MODERATED ALEXIS a draft of a film review I had written. I did so with pride for in this review Cinefile had finally exposed, I thought, the film's many failures. My friend, some pals, recommended, encouraged its perusal, but asked not this question: "Isn't it unfair, besides to write about what you have thus-and-yet-to-have?" And then I sensed like a most vicious vanity has been called and we must this review but for re-

THE AUTHOR (right) with his good friend Alexis

Alexis the Great

He may have died, but his words endure

By Jaime Sabillo

ONE OF THE GREATEST minds of the day a stone in the humming flow of conversation-writing and criticism, has passed on. Late Tuesday, Alexis Tioseco and his partner Nika Bolasco were killed in a road accident in Quezon City home.

Alexis, film critic and teacher, possessed a clear and remarkable voice that championed local cultures. Brisk reviewing would never suffice for him. He surveyed the genealogy of the auteurs and always kept the oracle—instead of the critic—at the center of the universe.

But more than that, he was an immensely kind man with a talent for friendship. His colleagues and students describe him as a shy gentleman, but he always exuded a kind of warmth and concern for the people around him. He had a rare combination of nobility and modesty.

Alexis promised his fellow countrymen's reappraisal of their outlook on local film culture. The loss of his voice, his critical and creative spirit was a reminder of the power of voice as a force for good.

In a blog post, Oggie Cruz said that a writer "ought to write for the youth of his generation, the critics of the now, and the enthusiasts of ever afterward." Anyone who reads Alexis' words knows many areas in which he has failed and rants. A number of us come away changed forever.

The flowering of our film criticism in the country is unimaginable without him. Then again, his writing spoke for the moment in a way that also spoke to the future. Alexis may have died, but his words endure.

A world without Alexis

He stayed in Manila out of love for the Philippines

By Philbert Dy

I WOULD LIKE TO TALK about courage.

Despite (or having more of) his many friends and working in the same field, I met Alexis Tioseco only this year. It was January and Cinemalaya. We were both there for the festival. I, as winner of the young critics program, he as festival guest, as the acting-ed authority on the films of our region.

I told him I didn't know what to expect, and I was kind of scared. It's one thing to be pointing the latest Arel Lamangan movie at home. It's another thing to suddenly be in an international film festival, talking with people who have a lot more experience and knowledge about film.

"Don't worry about it," he said.

Over the next few days, every time I ran into Alexis, he would be transforming me to another critic, another festival programmer, another director. Shmoozer, whore, work I had to say. He would introduce me by talking about my work. "He is through Mindanaoville and blogged the entire thing," or "He did a rat report on a food documentary." And I guess I would give a knowing chuckle, and he ate into them circle. Alexis vanished for me, after all.

I do not know what I would've done without Alexis. Holed up in my hotel room, perhaps taking from the Continental breakfast tea for and having seen much Mollywood, just trying to get through writing my festival reports. I cannot imagine what it must have been like for Alexis just a few years ago, taking on this ostracism thing all on his own, being sure to message home, having my opinions questioned, challenged and asked for by people with decades of experience above him.

A PORTRAIT

Alexis was Everything.

He stayed

I would like to talk about courage.

It always cringe a little when people talk about a senseless death, because it implies the existence of a sensible death, of suicide there to no such thing. Life, for all its dreams and irony, is the sensible way to be.

Every death, let it minimize and, random, painful or quick, is like a hole in the very fabric of our consciousness. There is a void left when a person used to be, and no level of understanding will ever make that better.

On the morning that news broke of Alexis' and Nika's death, the first true mind-blowing fit of, of course, people started for the circumstances of their death more by no means logical, that they could not know a line between the previous events of the couple's lives that would lead them to such a horrible end.

But even that is not necessary. The line is actually present.

They are gone because they stayed.

Alexis could've gone back to Canada, or used his credentials to get a job pretty much anywhere else in the world. He would've, like so many others, taken one look at the state of affairs here, including anyone who genuinely wants to change things to this country, and abandon it all for greener pastures, brighter shores.

And Nika could've stayed in Slovenia, closer to her family and everything she'd already realized for to his country.

But they were here. Out of love, their need and out of love for our cinema. Because there was so much he wanted to fight for, because he was brave enough to fight for all of it. And Nika, dear Nika, stayed out of love for Alexis, finding the courage to leave almost everything behind for a democracy and his dreams.

Love gives us courage, after all.

I would like to talk about courage, because I am afraid of a world without them. He was a colleague, an ally, a friend, someone who gave me courage to keep doing what I do, even if no one is listening.

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Postcard-pretty phone camera

Nokia 6700 Classic is the new 'it' phone

By Luis Carlo San Juan

PEOPLE LOVE TO TAKE PHOTOS, whether for vanity or for just capturing a moment. But cameras can get a bit bulky, that's why Nokia recently launched a new "it" phone that would definitely become a hit—the Nokia 6700 Classic.

It has a sleek, simple, metallic design and **comes seven for being functional.** It is, in fact, inspired by Coco Chanel's little black dress—simple, chic yet functional, a definite style staple.

Chanel's fashion philosophy was taken to heart by Nokia. The phone continues the legacy of the Nokia 6300, which topped all sales records for a midrange mobile phone.

The Nokia 6700 raises the bar even higher with a beautiful, slim design and

MILK Bistro's "Bon Bonjour"

WASABI options: tempura and Pinki marinated tuna

THE SLEEK Nokia 6700 Classic

PAKO Salad

KAI'S SOFT dust cozy spider rut

perfectly balanced practicality. The phone combines smooth surfaces, rich materials and precisely crafted joints with a full metal keymat, which completes the precision finish.

The phone comes with a five-megapixel camera, assisted GPS navigation with Nokia Maps, and high-speed data access, which means sharing images or video is faster and easier than ever.

We put the phone to the test when Nokia took us on a food trip to three restaurants, part of Philippine Tatler's "Best Restaurants Guide for 2009."

The tour included the premier Japanese restaurant, Kai, for appetizers, Lasen for the main course, and Sarah Stein's desserts, which was probably the best part for someone with a sweet tooth like me.

As an added bonus, the Nokia 6700 Classic also comes with a cute monkey-themed **graphic wallpaper, which eats a banana** when you charge it.

2009 FORMULA ONE™ SINGTEL SINGAPORE GRAND PRIX

The series of lifestyle and entertainment events happening during the entire 2009 Singapore Grand Prix Season is dubbed as

Katy Perry live in Manila on October 3

By Nina Mark M. Sablan
24/7 Correspondent

IT'S OFFICIAL—KATY "I KISSED A Girl" Hudson will be having a one-night-only concert in the Philippines! **Brought to the country by All South Channels, Inc.**, "Katy Perry Live in Manila" is scheduled on Oct. 3, 2009, at the SM Mall of Asia Concert Grounds.

Katy first attracted attention in 2007 when **she released the internet hit "Ur So Gay,"** a tongue-in-cheek track about a metrosexual ex (Gwen Stefani was a fan of the song!), but it was when the singer-songwriter released "I Kissed a Girl" in 2008 that everyone took notice of the promising pop star. The controversial song (it's about a girl experimenting with getting physical with another girl, after all) instantly became a hit, topping several charts worldwide and receiving several nominations for awards. Its visually stimulating video also became the most-viewed in several music channels—it was even the top video on MySpace that year.

After being proclaimed as the hot new **artist by readers of Rolling Stone Magazine** and prediction.com, Katy soon released her debut album called "One of the Boys," which spawned hits that were all catchy and bounced of candid lyrics: "Hot N Cold," "Thinking of You," and her latest, "Waking Up In Vegas."

Apart from great songs, another reason to love Katy is her unmatched energy when she's performing onstage. Oh, let's not forget her crazy outfits, too. She wore a carousel **skirt one time, and then a Christmas tree** dress during another.

Joining the talented artist, who shuffles upcoming as a guest judge on "American Idol," is pop rock band Street Like Girls, who are scheduled to release their second studio album called "Love Drunk" this Sept. 8.

Catch the international recording artist as she performs in the country for the very first time! Tickets are now available at P3,500 for VIP, P2,500 for Gold, P1,200 for Silver, and P400 for Bronze (plus 3 percent service charge). You can also check out www.ticketworld.com.ph or call 4920999 for ticket reservations. For more information, log on to www.mrphil.com.

Friend a girl and liked it? E-mail the author at ninamarksablan@yahoo.com.

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Trivia night showdown

Quiz night is now a popular alternative 'gimik' option; here's Part One of Super's favorite geeky haunts

By Bianca Cuevas

CALL IT REVENGE OF THE nerds. Call it total pack domination. But one thing's for sure: geeky "girlalis" are on the rise. Weary by mind-numbing partying and endless booze fests, college students and yuppies recently started looking for alternatives for a fun night out.

Then there was Restobar and its mainstay Brotherlyrider, Dimples, Hap dong Kin—three song-and-beer fests allowed yuppies to let go of all pretensions and have a fun, geeky time without having to look cool with a pricey cocktail in hand.

Then, Rock Band parties became popular with people who cherished rock star fantasies (without having to learn how to play a musical instrument). But now, the latest geeky nightlife trend is unquestionably trivia night.

So, you're really not sure where trivia night first began gaining popularity in Manila; but questions of originality aside, trivia night (quiz night to some) is definitely sprouting like mushrooms around the metro.

Read the author at bianca.cuevas@yahoo.com.

Restaurant 121

One of the most established trivia night destinations, Restaurant 121, packs in the 20 to 40-something crowd of yuppies and yuppies. Quiz master Ferro Bonds provides you the games every Tuesday night, where the topics can range from obscure geographical tidbits to pop culture staples. The food is cheap (look out for staples such as soup and rice meals) and the beer is cold, so it's a must-visit if you want to hang out with your barkada and show off your learned-ridge.

Call ahead or come really early, way before the scheduled time of the 9:30 p.m. start, because it's hard to get a table—trivia night at Restaurant 121 is that popular.

Trivia night celebrants at Restaurant 121

Questions tend to be more difficult, only completely unclear categories ("Shows of the World," for instance). Competitors have to fight, be prepared to popular like other teams who come on a regular basis and are ready to defend their thrones.

Address: 2/L, 121 Alleges Center, 2284 Pasong Tamo Extension
Contact: 8025091
Schedule: Tuesday nights from 9:30 p.m. to about 1:30 a.m.
Budget: P100-300/per head
What to expect: Yuppies, people, antiquity sneaky round cheats on Beer Rubros Time and Jagermeister
The payoff: A bottle of booze and gift certificates for the best-who wins at the end of the night

Reasons to come

- Cheap—food, drinks—food and drinks
- A (relatively) comprehensive range of questions (your 9 team things you never knew!)
- Friendly sense of competition among different teams

The drawbacks

- It starts and ends too late on many hours-never before, leaving only the hardcore teams to finish
- The same teams win every week (powerhouse teams ever get, leaving little room for others to win)
- The frequent breaks are roughly 20 minutes for intermission only dampen otherwise high spirits, as the momentum breaks!
- Snacks are hard to come by

Capricciosa

A newcomer on the block, Italian restaurant Capricciosa's quiz night has been around for only a couple of months, but is quickly gaining a following among the younger set.

Owner Will Tan, who presides over the quizmo, says, "The ones who come to Capricciosa are younger and are from the north area—we get a lot of college students and yuppies, particularly the ones from Ateneo."

Capricciosa is probably one of the most wholesome venues for trivia night; close-knit, timid yuppies gather to share pizza, pasta and cold beer over games. So, that make us mistake—the competitive can get pretty deadly as well.

Address: GF Fox Square Building, 33 Constellation St., Greenhills, San Juan
Contact: 7440689, 7440689
Schedule: Wednesday nights from 9:00 p.m. to about 12:30 a.m.
Budget: P100-300/per head
What to expect: Yuppies, students—people who enjoy themselves over originalities without
The payoff: A bottle of liquor (sometimes) and P1,000 gift certificates for the team who wins at the end of the night, plus a round of shots for the team that wins each round

Reasons to come

- Pretty good Italian food to begin with; on the days free cheese pizza and yummy fruit shakes
- Decent entertainment
- Tickets can get really fast-not for wild
- Free shots if you win a round!
- Happy Hour for the drinks

The drawbacks

- The food is pricier than at other venues
- The venue isn't well known yet, so it takes a while to fill up for the game to start
- The MIA is turned off during the game proper to avoid any cheating going on, but a bummer if you really need to check your e-mail or send a Tweet during the game
- The restaurant is a bit small, so you can't get in too many teams (less competition!)

CAPRICCIOSA owner Will Tan treats winners to shots.

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ovi

LIFESTYLE

Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan
Subeditor Editor Pam Pastor

How I studied fashion in Japan –and bagged a prize for my 'terno'

My schoolmates and teachers were so amazed with the butterfly sleeves!

By Denise Aquino
Contributor

RIGHT BEFORE GRADUATION, I was looking for a scholarship to study fashion abroad.

I was in luck. It was Christmas 2005, and I was granted a three-year scholarship by the Japanese government.

At that time, I thought I had everything I needed to survive. Looking back, I realized it helped to prepare for one thing: language. To say that I was "fear to translation" is an understatement.

But I was given the chance to study in the best fashion school in Asia, Bunka Fukuso Gakuin or Bunka Fashion College in Shinjuku, Tokyo. How could I quit?

Strict curriculum

My school specializes in fashion design and related disciplines. It is known for its strict curriculum and heavy workload. It has over 30 branches all over Japan and has exchange programs with Central Saint Martins in London and Parsons in New York. Its famous alumni include Reiko Takada, Junya Watanabe and Yohji Yamamoto.

HOW I STUDIED (2)

Graphics Design Aldec Joshua Cato

A weekly directory of the country's best establishments

Where to Stop Where to Go

Guest Thai therapist at Devarana Spa

THIS SEPTEMBER 2009, SPA LOVERS AND patrons of Devarana Spa at Rizal Thrill Manila are in to experience authentic Thai treatments from Khon Kruapaad Sucha, a guest Thai therapist who will be offering traditional herbal compress and Thai massage as well as other must-try varieties of spa treatments with an authentic touch of Thainess.

Traditional Thai massage and herbal remedies have been recognized for their natural healing benefits for over centuries. Whilst Thai massage uses passive stretching and pressure to help increase flexibility, relieve muscular and joint tension, stimulate internal organs and balance the body's energy system, Thai herbal compress combines hot baths with various combinations of herbs to help soothe muscle aches and pains as well as easing of respiration with its aromatic properties.

With 20 years of training from authorized Thai massage schools and many years of experience at Devarana Spa in Thailand, Khun Kruapaad visits Manila for a month-long of delivering traditional healing treatments and luxurious pampering offered with a heavenly scent in a soothing, aroma-relieving and nurturing environment.

So whether you suffer from muscle aches and pains, or need extra pampering, Khun Kruapaad looks forward to pleasing you with the healing power of authentic Thai touch at Devarana Spa at the second floor of Rizal Thrill Manila.

For bookings and reservation, please contact manila@devaranaspa.com or call 818-7081 or 867-3333.

KAPIHAN FORUM AT SULO

Known for its executive seminars and corporate conventions, the Sulo Riviera Hotel formerly Sulo Hotel takes pride in hosting political gatherings and socio-economic functions such as the weekly forum 'Kapihan Sa Sulo'. With a rich tradition of service, it has become an exact venue to conduct business. Photo shows (from left) Sulo Riviera's head of marketing Lani Cansilid, Sen. Manny Villar, Sulo Riviera PR/marketing manager Gen Ocon and Sulo Riviera's HR officer Uvie Gomez. Photo was taken at last Saturday's Kapihan. For inquiries and reservations, please call 822-8858 / 8850 to 51 or visit the Sulo Riviera Hotel located along Mahatma Road, Tahanan, Quezon City or log on to www.sulohotel.com.ph.

Flavors of Thailand at Edsa Shang

THIS SEPTEMBER, EDSA Shangri-La, Manila greets everyone's "Sawadee" as it presents Flavors of Thailand at Henri. From Sept. 4 to 20, chefs Tanasorn Pathawee and Komsorn Wuthi of Shangri-La Bangkok's famous Salathip restaurant will showcase their signature dishes. Diners may look forward to sumptuous Thai specialties ranging from curries to the way to dessert. Tempt your palates as the Thai chefs whip up their specialties like panel Thai goong (stir-fried Thai noodle with shrimps), som kha gai (chicken and galangal with coconut syrup), gai phad med mamuang (fried chicken with cashew nut) and yakl khow (stir-fry sticky rice with Thai custard).

Most people think that Thai cuisine is hot and spicy. This may be true to a certain extent but it is also because few in Bahamas. Add flavors to each dish or the overall meal – hot, sour, sweet, salty and it comes, even blows it is a blend between Chinese and Indian cooking. A flavours shared with Chinese cuisine is the staple foods which are rice and noodles. On the other hand, the similarity to Indian cuisine is the curry. The Chinese and Thai cuisine is the use of soy sauce and abundance of chili. Other staple spices in Thai cooking are coriander leaf, turmeric, ginger and lemon grass.

At Edsa Shangri-La, savor these delectable cuisine when you dine at Henri and get a chance to win a vacation courtesy of Cebu Pacific Air and Shangri-La Hotel, Bangkok. Diners with a minimum food bill of P3,000 are entitled to join the raffle.

The Richmonde Grill's Chef's Exclusives for September

THE RICHMONDE GRILL FEATURES ANOTHER unique and delectable collection of dishes to delight everyone craving for a satisfying meal this month of September.

To whet your appetite is the Minestrone di Verdure, a light tomato broth with Mediterranean vegetables, while well worth considering your choice of main dish of sirloin grilled chicken with pesto and apple salsa, marinated in basil and white wine or pan roasted mahi mahi with olives, capers and tomato, drizzled with lemon sauce and served with steamed pancha rice. A generous serving of a delicate panzanella dessert, provides a sweet finish to this exquisite PhP25 set lunch or dinner set.

This exclusive offering is served all day, from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily. For inquiries or reservations, please call the Richmonde Grill at 889-8419 or 636-7777 extension 3409. The Richmonde Grill is located at the 2nd floor of The Richmonde Hotel, 21 San Miguel Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

GRILLED Chicken with pesto and apple salsa.

Microtel

How I studied fashion in Japan . . .

Homepage D1

The College was founded in 1930 by Isaburo Suzuki as a small dressmaking school for girls called Suzuki Dressmaking School. This was a time when Western-style clothing for women was only available via affluent families. In 1998, the name of the school became Bunka Fashion College, and the school began publishing So-en, Japan's first fashion magazine.

Fashion in Japan is serious business. Our curriculum not only included basic pattern-making, history and drawing; we also had subjects on textile chemistry, computer-aided design, fashion business and visual merchandising. We even had to work in an actual factory setting to experience mass production first-hand.

All books, lectures and exams were in Nihonggo. I remember one lecture where my teacher kept saying "Oto Kodomo" it meant "Inner concept."

Humbling experience

During the first few days, I felt like Lindsay Lohan in "Mean Girls," with no friends to chat and have lunch with. The Japanese have this shield against foreigners, since they can't speak English. After a few months, though, it got better. My classmates began helping translate my books in exchange for practicing their English with me.

My school is a dream fashion school. It has a store selling everything we need—needles, textiles, mannequins, art materials, even teachers! When I was busy in school and had no time to go shopping, I just went to the makeup section and indulged myself in Shiseido, Max Factor and even Avene.

I found our library. Here I got all the art and fashion books from all over the world. The room had a rack devoted to all the Vogue editions from different countries.

Our textile library was also very cool. We had a collection of fabrics used in different fashion shows all over the world, dating from decades back.

Best graduation piece

On my second year, I started getting awards and I started to be noticed by my peers and teachers. This truly gave me the inspiration to work harder. Soon I am the first Filipino to enter the school, I wanted to make our country proud by working hard and showing them that we Filipinos are creative, talented and, like the Japanese, also have a very interesting culture.

This is why I constantly make an effort to include little details of our culture in every project I do. I felt really proud when I received a special award for the best graduation piece. The gown I designed was my own version of our Philippine "terno." The Japanese were so amazed with the butterfly sleeves!

I was really happy to receive the award. I was even made part of the finale for the graduating batch's fashion show!

Life in Japan, though very challenging, was fun and interesting. I gained a lot of Japanese friends who helped me survive the challenges in school and of being constantly homesick. They're like family to me now.

CLASSMATES posing beside my project

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For more inquiries and bookings, contact Torre Venezia at (632)332-3658 to 60 or e-mail torrevenezia@quantumresorts.com.

Venture 7 Bazaar at The Intercon

THE DYNAMIC LADIES OF Venture 7 will hold its two bazaars on Oct. 6 and Dec. 6, both Sundays, at the Grand Ballroom of the Hotel Intercontinental Manila in Ayala Ave., from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Now on its fifth successful year, this much awaited bazaar has always been major fun of pouring and budding entrepreneurs as participants. It will also feature unique items and bestsellers from here and abroad. The Venture 7 ladies are composed of Pilar Bautista-Silva, Estela Bautista, Amanda Dayrit (president and chair), Lila Balanza, Chit Estella, Josiane Lukmana and Linda Villabrolgue (co-chair). For interested participants and inquiries, call 843-9507, 811-0588 (Lina), 810-3357 and 0915-7885-09. Major credit cards accepted.

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HER CANDY-COLORED accessories remain "statement pieces."

DESIGNER Agatha Ruiz de la Prada (L) appears at the end of her show during the Pasarela Cibeles Autumn/Winter '09-'10 fashion week in Madrid.

Fun in the Sun

Online-hot Spanish designer Agatha Ruiz dela Prada gives a whole new meaning to 'Sunny Spain'

By Luis Carlo San Juan

FALL, WHEN THE LEAVES TURN gold, can be late. Which is where Spanish designer Agatha Ruiz dela Prada, inspired by works of Jason Pollock, Piet Mondrian and Yayoi Kusama, proved at the Madrid Fashion Week.

Known for her fiercely independent streak, Agatha manages to shun trends. Her works are like walking canvases, reflecting color, optimism and humor. With her success, she has also become an ambassador for Spanish art.

Also a strong supporter of environmental awareness, she has created campaigns for the Green Party and video games teaching kids how to take care of the environment through their medium. Visit her site at http://www.agatharuizdelapra-da.com.

SHE HAS a playful way of mixing colors that just expresses optimism.

HER WORKS are like walking canvases.

Win this:

We're giving away two bag books designed by Agatha Ruiz de la Prada exclusively distributed by Fitria. Just answer this question: What is the weirdest thing you have in your bag? E-mail your answer to is_2fun@inquirer.com.ph

IN THIS ISSUE
■ **Overacting now** the norm on TV dramas /F2

Editor Nestor U. Torre ● Assistant Editor Rito P. Asilo

SATURDAY Special

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Fil-Am writes timely play about *beauty pageants*

ALVAREZ. Foxy ideations

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Andrew V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—JUST IN time, in the aftermath of the recent Miss Universe pageant, where many Filipinos felt that Miss Philippines Bianca Manalo should have fared better, a play about our obsession with beauty contests opens in LA on Sept. 11.

"Baby, Tragically Beloved" was written by Bert R. Alvarez, a US-born actor-playwright whose parents hail from Antique. Bert holds a BA from Saint Lawrence College, an MBA in acting from The ART/MAM Institute for Advanced Theatre Training at Harvard University and an MFA in dramatic writing from the University of Southern California (USC). He teaches at USC and LA Trade Tech College.

The dramedy tells the story of Baby Salazar, a full-figured Filipina who is one semester away from a college degree when her mother, Soledad, a beauty queen contender in her youth, decides to use Baby's tuition money for another daughter's expenses as a beauty pageant contestant. Baby decides to enter the pageant herself to

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3 YEAR ONE
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO
5 THE FINAL DESTINATION
6 UP (Digital 3D)
7 UP
8 [illegible]
9 KIMMYDORA
10 G.I. JOE | DISTRICT 9

ERMITA

1 BRUNO
2 YEAR ONE
3 THE FINAL DESTINATION
4 UP | DISTRICT 9
5 KIMMYDORA
6 AND I LOVE YOU SO
7 LAND OF THE LOST

METRO EAST

1 YEAR ONE
2 BRUNO
3 KIMMYDORA
4 THE FINAL DESTINATION
5 LAND OF THE LOST
6 UP | G.I. JOE
7 AND I LOVE YOU SO
8 [illegible]

NOVALICHES

1 YEAR ONE
2 KIMMY DORA
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 LAND OF THE LOST

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1 THE FINAL DESTINATION
2 YEAR ONE
3 KIMMY DORA
4 LAND OF THE LOST

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2 THE HANGOVER
3 YEAR ONE
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO

LIPA

1 THE HANGOVER
2 TAROT
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 KIMMY DORA

DASMARIÑAS

1 AND I LOVE YOU SO
2 SHORTS
3 YEAR ONE
4 KIMMY DORA

IMUS

1 AND I LOVE YOU SO
2 LAND OF THE LOST
3 YEAR ONE
4 KIMMY DORA

STARMILLS

1 TAROT
2 AND I LOVE YOU SO
3 ALIENS IN THE ATTIC
4 KIMMY DORA
5 YEAR ONE
6 DISTRICT 9

ANGELES

1 ALIENS IN THE ATTIC
2 AND I LOVE YOU SO
3 KIMMY DORA
4 YEAR ONE

TACLOBAN

1 YEAR ONE
2 LOL: LOVE ON LINE
3 ORPHAN

BACOLOD

1 YEAR ONE
2 AND I LOVE YOU SO
3 KIMMY DORA
4 DISTRICT 9
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STREET SMART

Wendy Sarmiento

THIS IS A LETTER from Wendy Dodrigo-Sagisihan's big sister. "I have known Wendy since birth. She's been a beautiful child inside and out.

"When Joseph Pangalinan, or Joe, came along, Wendy was totally uninterested. But I knew that this Pylaro was special. What awakened me were the appetizers. I bought them from a bakeshop on Cuenca, and Wendy said they didn't taste good. But, when Joe brought them from the same bakery, she raved about them! The rest is history.

Successful careers

"Wendy and Joe are made for each other. They think alike, they've both been broke—and they're very much in love. They also have successful careers in California, USA."

Reading their sweet wedding in Manila, Wendy's beloved sister-in-law gives us a glimpse of what to look for in a groom. She declared, "May she love you [illegible] for each other. Rewards and multiply a thousandfold. May she like you are about to share be filled of praise and compassion, as well as patience and understanding."

Wendy's father is former PNP General Ike Candoy, who is the first cousin of my mother, Lourdes.

E-mail: mail@newsstar.ph

Chain of terrifying . . .

From page 01

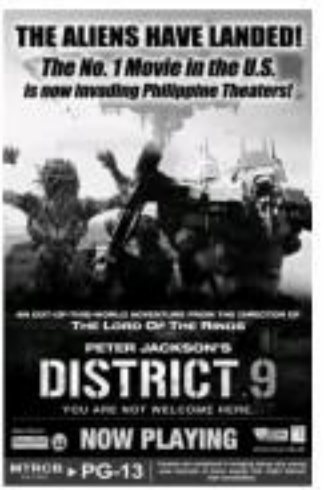
monsters adapted from books or short stories. In fact, out of 13 Best Picture winners, over half started out as a book or short story.

At the Manila International Book Fair (Sept. 16-20 at the SMX Convention Center), the books from which these wonderful films were created will be showcased by some of comic con exhibitors. This is the MIBF's 30th year, so there will be other special events like book launches, storytelling sessions, art workshops and more! Call 899-9861, e-mail booklandpr@newsstar.com.

Smart joins 2009 Tuna Festival

Leading wireless services provider, Smart Communications, Inc. (Smart), is one of the main partners of the General Santos (Gensan) City government and the Tuna Festival Council for this weekend's Tuna Festival celebration.

All are welcome to attend and enjoy, and those who will buy a Smart Buddy SIM at the venue and load P50 will receive a ticket to join a raffle where home appliances and Smart Buddy prepaid bundles will be up for grabs.



Community of fortune-tellers comes to life in compelling indie

VALDES AND ROMERO. There's no mistaking away from the pack.

True wealth

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Hassanah

• A PERSON threatened with the false prestige of opulence doesn't rest for moral instruction. Instead, he squanders precious resources on wasteful luxuries that cause misery and anxiety.

• A poor man is shown in a better situation than a wealthy person, because he understands the difficulties of life. He doesn't waste riches or feel his hunger, thirst and pain.

Compassion

• No subject may rule out from the pile of poverty and dedicate part of their wealth to ease people's suffering. This wealth contains not only of money, but also of compassion and empathy.

• Simplicity and honesty despite wealth determine and motivate.

• A poor man cannot become abnormally hit by overeating. And, he must be doesn't overeat, his senses don't become overly disturbed and agitated.

• Nine pride due to wealth and power is a huge stumbling block for spiritual liberation and freedom.

By Nestor Torre

"I'VE ALWAYS BEEN MEETing fortune-tellers by chance," shares Paolo Herrera, writer and director of "Ang Manghuhula." "If you believe in fate as the movie's characters do, however, all those chance encounters may have been more than mere random occurrences.

"Ang Manghuhula" is Herrera's third film and, like his first two, it draws from a central image. "Lansbasog," his first, centered on an enchanted bottle of the drink, while "Bahasisi" played with the visual and metaphorical possibilities of food and food preparation. "Combing from a literary background, I've always loved using metaphors," explains Herrera. "After doing movies about drink and food, I thought I'd do one about cards."

Like "Bahasisi," his latest film explores the relationships of three generations of women. The lead character is Hermie (Eugene Villaluz), a fortune-teller who no longer wants to see into the future. Disenchanted with her role as the seer for her community—a village that seems to be made up mostly of fortune-tellers—and in terms her mother and daughter behind. There's no running away from the past, however, and she finds herself having to go back in order to save her daughter (Gillian de Castro) from becoming the town's next seer.

Solid actors

Valdes gives a performance that manages to be compelling without being over-the-top. She is supported by solid actors, including Ces Carino, Chanda Romero (as Dorothea, her mother), Emilio Garcia, Perry Dizon and Bella Flores.

Apart from its fascinating subject matter, colorful characters and marquee cast, the production is notable for its visual richness and clarity. The use of high-definition cameras no doubt enhanced the depth and crispness of each meticulously composed scene. More than a few images will linger in your memory, especially those that dip into magic realism. In the script, which Herrera co-wrote with Michiko Rivera, an active community of fortune-tellers comes to life.

Festival win validates Ralston Jover's advocacy

By Rica Arevalo

FIRST-TIME DIRECtor Ralston Jover was nowhere in sight when his name was called at the Cinemalaya premiere of "Thirteen Rebel Boys," which is inspired by an "Ulirismo" down. nanaGay. He said he chose to shun the spotlight. "I think at the time, especially since this is my first directorial effort. I'm not sure if people will like it."

Jover notes the scrumptious of socially relevant films like "Rekwiem," "Manoro," "Sister Stella" and "Brakas" after receiving Gawadalaya's Network for the Promotion of Asian Cinema (Netpac) award, he feels vindicated.

Visual medium

From the start, the production was beset with difficult challenges: crewmen resigning, lack of financing, tedious script revisions, major props stolen the night before shooting, etc! He continues, "Before the challenge for me was only in the writing. Then, I had to tell the story using the visual medium, where the level of difficulty was so much more!"

The cast, led by Gino Parvilo, included established talent Alvaro like Meljun Gedang from Bianca, Jover recalls, "Meljun wasn't afraid to act with Gino. He doesn't have the ego. He doesn't mind how to read and recite, so we just fed him lines...and he delivered like a pro!"

In Ramos, the lost of life is a organic occurrence. We see children suffering from inhumane conditions as they live underneath railroads to retrieve scrap metal for survival. The films's producers are mapping their private notes to help provide scholarships for these children. Jover proudly shares: "By the end of the shooting, most of them went back to school."

The esteemed director boasts, "This is our advocacy. Our hardships have been validated by the movie's positive feedback. The Makati Boys are going places—and the film has been invited to festivals in Pusan, Vancouver and Thessaloniki."

GALZADO. Begins role in Hollywood adaptation of Jun Higuera's thriller.

QUINO. Cast as a blind decorator in "Hurumanes."

Chain of terrifying murders

DENNIS QUINO'S LATEST STARring, "Hurumanes," casts him as a horror director who becomes more. Comedy director Jun Hurumanes is trying to solve the death of his devoted wife.

While investigating a series of bloody deaths, he discovers a terrifying link between himself and the suspect in the chain of murders that mirrors the horror found in the Biblical prophecies involving the four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: Famine, Pain, Pestilence and Death.

Jesse Ancheta's unnervingly thrilling tale also exploits culturally acclimated actors, Zoi Thorp ("Crying Ladies"), Sigrid Andrea Bernardo ("Ang Babaeng Hinalay and Pinatay ng Isang Beses"), Gardo Versoza, Gilbo Gallo, Jr. ("Resurrected") opens on Sept. 16.

Cine Europa 12

On Sept. 10, the Cine Europa film festival opens at the Shang Cineplex's Cinema 9 with the Swedish film, "The Guy in the Grave Sent Down." The European festival is presented by the Ambassadors of the European Union to the Philippines.

MONTAGE

'The Echo'

Tom Lazzaro has remade his chilling film, "Signo," into a Hollywood thriller produced by Star Lee and retitled "The Echo." The film is in English and stars Jesse Bradford and Iza Calzado. It Tina Ramirez, Jerold Pelayo, Mitzie Brosas. "The Echo" hits local theaters on Sept. 23.

'Anghuhyuyan'

From Sept. 9 to 20 at the Wilfredo Ma. Guerrero Theater, Dulaang UP stages Rumaria von Kriel's "Anghuhyuyan," with Jessy Brigueta's Filipino translation directed by Jose Estrella. The tale of love, godly powers and mistaken identities topples Hell Sosa, Lex Marcos and Ida macMahadway. Call 926-1349.

Movies on TV

On HBO today at 12 n., "Broken Bridges." Stays 4 to 6:31 a.m., "Enemy mine." Sept. 7 at 11 a.m., "Coming to America." Sept. 8 at 6:45 p.m., "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix." Sept. 9 at 8 p.m., "Bad and Boujee." Sept. 10 at 7 p.m., "21." Sept. 13 at 1:15 p.m., "Harry Potter's Day Off."

On Cinemax today at 7 a.m., "Desert Heat." Sept. 6 at 7 a.m., "Three in the Mill." Sept. 7 at 1:15 p.m., "Lords dog." Sept. 8 at 8 p.m., "Bonds of the Bulge." Sept. 9 at 6:35 p.m., "The Blues Brothers." Sept. 10 at 1:1 a.m., "Iron Eagle." Sept. 11 at 7 a.m., "Rancher League of America."

Voice as Asset workshop

Rediscover the natural beauty of your voice in the Voice as Asset workshop today and on Sept. 13 at the Corporate Mind Training Room, City and Land Mega Plaza, 4th ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City. The workshop will be facilitated by Josephine Gomez, Jr. Gil Montes and Cecile Pavlina. Call 687-7888 or 0921 239-7825.

Rivera shares that the songs are also about family, the basic inspiration behind the new album. The compilation is distributed by Castdl. Visit www.castdl.com.

From page to screen

Books to film is a trend that's ravaging Hollywood, with five of last year's Oscar Best Picture

Liners H.

ANG PELIKULANG
WINNER SA KUWELA

OGIE ALCASID MICHAEL V.

YAYA & ANGELINA
THE SPOILED BABY MOVIE

IZA CALZADO LEN MARTINEZ BOBBIE GOINGS
RON MUELDREZ and JONARI YLLANA

OPENS IN THEATERS
SEPTEMBER 23

Fil-Am writes timely play ...

From page E1

win the money back, no matter the price."

In the cast are Ellen O. Williams, Marc Pelias, Fran de Leon, Kennedy Kilmasoon, Alexis dela Cruz, Robert Almodovar, Mendelle Bellamy, Regan Cunningham, Kacy-Ezel Ravid, Mark Dozer, Katherine Lee and Angel Sue Felix. Directed by Filipino Joel Lawrence Rivera, "Ruby" runs until Oct. 11 at the Los Angeles Theatre Center (www.thelatc.com). (More information is available at www.rubylatc.org.)

Before our excerpts of our interview with Reid, whose play "Dallas Non-Stop," was awarded an honorable mention by the EDC Island of Playwrights:

How did the idea for this play come about?

"Ruby Traphelly Remail" was my first project at USC. I was inspired by a Illinois Issue Forum play that my class was studying. I wanted to write about a fat girl trapped in a caligon, and I used that. But playwas were inside a house, not outdoors. I always wanted to write a "fat" play—one that deals with size and the feelings that are lodged in a big shell—then, Ruby emerged.

Share your thoughts and experiences dealing with Green Pacs' obsession, beauty pageants, getting a college degree, family relations and public image?

As typical Filipino families, I love beauty pageants. As a kid, I absolutely loved the Miss Universe pageants. I secretly wished that I could compete. There are standards of beauty within the Pinoy culture that continue to hold true. Being taller, lighter in skin tone, having a narrow nose and being slender are all perceived as better—but the only thing I am is "tall for a Filipina," so I could turn my attention toward school.

Tall order

Were you actively involved in the auditions, especially in casting Ruby Salazar?

Yes, Jess was generous in letting me be a part of the casting process. Ellen Williams plays Ruby, and she's amazing. She totally got Ruby and made her world. She's just wonderful to work on the characters. Ellen is bold, funny and unapologetic, but she's also sweet, so the audience will completely empathize with her.

If a Jewish chorus were composed of Filipinos, what would they announce and? What would their costumes be like?

The chorus in "Ruby" is comprised of her friends...her teenagers. The chorus serves as an emotional support to Ruby. They celebrate their laziness and acknowledge one another's flaws when dealing with the "normal" outside world. I don't know what a Filipino chorus would sound like or how they would function in the play. They'd probably have the same comments and observations as Euterpe, the modern.

Can you tell us about your Filipino background?

I was born in the Stanford University Hospital and grew up in East Palo Alto to the San Francisco Bay area. My mom moved to the States in the '60s and lived in Stockton, California. My mom and dad were pen pals. Then, my father moved here in the '70s. They're Visayan from Antique.

I have flashback scenes in "Ruby" which are entirely in Binisaya, a Visayan dialect. It's my parents' language. I find that, compared to Tagalog, Binisaya is a more musical language. In those flashbacks, I wanted to sexy, hopeful and romantic mood, so I decided to write them in Binisaya.

"Ruby" is a very Filipino play because it is infused with Pinoy cultures—my experience of it, specifically Ruby has a Filipino family, but she also has a blossoming relationship with her African-American boyfriend that could lead to a family of her own. At the same time, she has a very diverse group of female friends who she doesn't consider family.

While "Ruby" is very Filipino, it's also very American—not just Filipino-American, but how we fit into the entire American landscape, not only as an individual group, but also in how we live with other groups.

Email the columnist at rvsquire_2003@yahoo.com, and read the Rap, "The Squire's Report," at http://blogs.inquirer.com/squire-report.

SATURDAY Special

NOW SHOWING

Riveting moments of comedy, vulnerability

DOMINGO (WITH DAANTSE, LEFT): Thespic big-of'chicks.

By Rito P. Asilo

"Kimmy Dora"
(R, Joyce Bernal)
(+ Eugene Domingo, Dingdong Dantes, Ariel Ureta)

BIG STARS TAKE THE back seat in Joyce Bernal's "Kimmy Dora," in fact, Eugene Domingo's starrer proves that movies don't always require marquee names to create a desk in viewers' consciousness.

Stargazing

In "Kimmy Dora," moviegoers will find themselves stargazing from beginning to end, courtesy of the steady stream of blink-and-you'll-miss-them cameos: Pinky Proctor, Regine Velasquez, Marvin Agustin, Enrique Moreno, Iruh Mae Quisumbing, etc.

But, the stellar show of support in this entertaining indie can't take the spotlight away from Domingo, who pulls off a difficult high-wire act to portray the likes teasing brother's twins, Kimmy and Dora (Jo Dong Hee).

The sibling-rivalry premise isn't all that original: Smart and clockwork-efficient Kimmy is driven by her almost pathological jealousy toward her favored identical-twin sister, the meek and emotionally fragile Dora, who doesn't need to do much to win the affection of their aging tycoon father, Señor Loloito (Ariel Ureta).

The climactic moment when Kimmy finds the mate of her dreams in the hunky but nerdy Johnson (Dingdong Dantes), who rips her clever amorous advances in the bud—by pursuing her sister's cluck. To add insult to injury, Señor Loloito dons heaven 80 percent of the family fortune to Dora. Who wouldn't go bonkers?

But real woe is ever in the Pido Pantal-Judy ann Santos movie, "Don't Give Up On Us"—but that was three years ago. With a lot of help from screenwriter Chris Martinez and Domingo's spot-on performance, the director finally gets her romantic-genre bark.

Attention

The movie has a number of technical gaffes (the screen darkens when Kimmy and Dora, both played by Domingo, are shown together) and excessive (unfunded) (caricature leads to intentional regression, typically-ended moments, etc.). But, they don't divert viewers' attention from the fast-paced exposition and winsome performances of Ureta, Dantes and the lovely Shirley Quintelino, who plays Gertrude, Kimmy's multi-talented personal assistant.

In just performances, the dramatic-trained Domingo has more room for consciously playing to the peanut gallery to loud and brief abandon and pandering to the TV medium's sitcom-shtick sensibility.

Outbursts

In "Kimmy Dora," however, most of the actress' outbursts are character-motivated. She utilizes her deeper bag of tricks in earnest to limn both the differences and similarities of the twins. Distinctively, more than Eugene handles Kimmy's characterization in the scene where the clueless government operatives are tasked with identifying which is which.)

Domingo conveys Kimmy's iron will and determination; but, in the stubborn character's moments of vulnerability, the actress strongly evokes Kimmy's insecurities—and encourages viewers to cheer her on when the ultra-bright-eyed twin finally finds her way home.

LAUNCH. Portrays the brilliant but arrogant title character in "House."

TV series offer edgy takes on life and love

By Nestor U. Torre

DON'T LOOK NOW, BUT THE MOST popular TV show on the cable is—"House." The more it's no surprise that medical dramas many fans, but it's still remarkable that a show that unfolds a middle-aged actor (Hugh Laurie) can delight the global TV audience, which is demographically dominated by young viewers.

Since we watch "House" regularly, we know why it's made such a good impression on so many viewers: It's the character is depicted as a brilliant but uneasy person, with the bedside manner of a cockroach.

This contradictory characterization provides the drama with the edgy unpredictability that keeps it interesting and absorbing.

The fact that Dr. House appears to be underdog and even "cruel" can be a turn-off, but not for long. Viewers soon realize that the surly doctor really does have his patients' best interest at heart.

So, why is he so surly? Because he's emotionally wrapped—a character note that reinforces viewers, even as it further spices up the show's dramatic zing.

House's saving grace is his diagnostic brilliance. When he can't figure out what's wrong with a patient, he goes from one medical possibility to another, until he comes up with the culprit—which often turns out to be a big surprise, a "small" symptom that most other doctors would miss.

In the process, the show "teaches" viewers (and perhaps some doctors as well) not to take anything for granted, and to consider all possibilities—not just when it comes to illnesses, but to relations to other people, as well.

'Trust Me'

A new show that's also been holding our attention is "Trust Me." It's set in the glossy, stressful world of advertising, but it focuses on the friendship between a section manager and his assistant. There is a decidedly volatile relationship, but it all makes out in the end, because when push comes to shove need the man finally settles, their hearts are in the right place.

"Trust Me" is viewable because of this quality friendship, and the other characters in the advertising agency are similarly rooted—but ultimately likable. Given this quality cast of characters, viewers don't even have to be in the know about advertising industry to enjoy the series.

'Kath and Kim'

Also coming from way out of left field is "Kath and Kim," which focuses on a middle-aged mom who falls in love again at the worst possible time—just as her daughter leaves her husband to get a divorce.

The new sitcom then turns out to be a garden-eyed look at love as someone highly viewed by new generations, with both young and "old" couples learning valuable lessons from each other.

Singer with soul is Davao's pride

By Boots Cervantes

COMES (LOOSE), with Susan Lacina's jazzsters Perico, Paolo Sol, Benny Estrada and Chico Zambrano.

WE WENT TO THE BLUE ROOM of the Apo View Hotel in Davao City recently to watch a reglow, Pablo Sol, perform. Paolo is the bass guitarist of Susan Lacina, which plays "cool jazz," as blends describe their music. They told me that Paolo is "one of the best in the country" so whenever a foreign artist is in need of an extra bass guitarist in Manila, he's always hired to help out.

When we entered the Blue Room, Paolo recognized my niece, Mon, and Bong Angeles, a cousin. However, it was the swinging singer Nino Cortes, who acknowledged our presence. Bong informed me that Nino and his husband, Benny Estrada, the group's lead guitarist, had just returned to resort in the Maldives—for seven years!

Benny provided great harmonies, lead and vocal support for the vivacious Nino, who sure request requested "La Vie En Rose" and "La Mer." Thereafter, she performed a perky medley of similar numbers in Portuguese and Spanish. The room was soon rocking, with the audience completely captivated by the singer's charm and verve.

Repertoire

The charismatic performer's repertoire of jazz classics was sung with grace and aplomb. Her stunning appearance with the audience was confident. She was about home to relinquish the glide. And, she almost only what was appropriate to her personality and style. Suri quipped: "She is a natural in quality!" She was, indeed.

Nino was not the bar's noise chanteuse by singing and dancing with attention. She was most definitely the Blue Room's main attraction. She had her audience (mine) by giving her all. If the songs were bouncy, she was vibrant and upbeat. If they were sad love songs, she generously shared her soul.

Nino Cortes is a brown, singer with soul. She is one of the most impressive performers I have heard in a long time. She should be seen and heard in Manila!

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THE PHILIPPINE MADRIGAL SINGERS. Designated as "Unesco Artists for Peace."

CCP concert showcases Madz's musicality, advocacy

THE ACCLAIMED chorale's latest album [above] was launched at their recent performance.

By Sharon Rokas-Macasaet

FRESH FROM BEING designated as "Unesco Artists for Peace," the Philippine Madrigal Singers aka Mads recently held a two-night concert, "Mads About Love, Mads About Peace," at the CCP Main Theater.

The homecoming concert didn't disappoint. The Mads serenaded the crowd with one moving piece after another. First, they displayed their flair for staging songs in different languages so flawlessly that, even if you didn't understand the lyrics, you'd still be moved by the group's rendition.

The audience also witnessed the conductorless-chorale ceremonies held at Unesco headquarters in Paris, shown on a wide screen. The CCP concert also launched "Mads in Love Continues ...," the group's latest album from Sony Music that features contemporary romantic duties.

At the concert, the Mads gave samples from their latest recording. An expected, "It Might Be You" was well-applauded, and "Love of My Life" featured no less than the choirmaster himself, Mark Anthony Carpio, in soloist. Also notable were their renditions of "Boy Special Love" and "How Did You Know?". The choral pieces in the 11-track album were arranged by assistant choirmaster, Christopher Benito.

Treat

Another treat was the comic (and choreographed) number by the choir's male ensemble, who wowed the crowd when they performed a tweaked version of "Impersimon." And the members of the male ensemble—particularly the soprano ones—decided to delight when the group sang Jason Mraz's romantic hit, "I'm Yours."

Before the show ended, Carpio reminisced the group's contribution to the theme of Unesco through music, to Unesco's "Artist for Peace," the Mads' true to honor peace and understanding among nations and cultures, bringing great music to every one, regardless of race and language.

NOW SHOWING

WILL FERRELL

LAND OF THE LOST

PG-13

Sidus Entertainment Corporation

Overacting now the norm on TV dramas

By Nestor U. Torre

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 14)

GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

A. LIPIN — BY JOSE ABRERA

PUGAD BABOY — BY ROY LUMICAO JR.

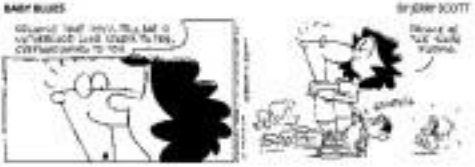
DICK TRACY

LOVEKNOTS — BY ELIZABETH CHOMKO

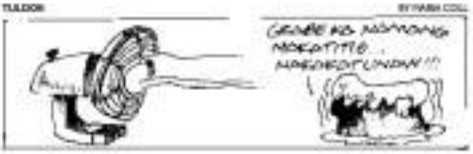
JAMES BOND

DIXIE COMEDY — BY STEVEN PABALINAS

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT



TULDOK — BY RAMIL COLL



MIH — BY DANIEL SHELTON

ATOMO AND WEBOY — BY LYRA GARCELLANO

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

FOUR DOMINANT STARS: You have conservative imagination. You have a keen eye. People love to see you compete! You're artistic or humble and authentic entertaining! You love to enjoy yourself. You don't hesitate to start new projects. But you like the falls. In the near future you can have or make something valuable. Plan for this, and allow for changes.
SYMBOLS OF THE ZODIAC: Aries (Mar 21 to April 20) Taurus (April 21 to May 21) Gemini (May 22 to June 21) Cancer (June 22 to July 23) Leo (July 24 to Aug. 23) Virgo (Aug. 24 to Sept. 23) Libra (Sept. 24 to Oct. 23) Scorpio (Oct. 24 to Nov. 22) Sagittarius (Nov. 23 to Dec. 21) Capricorn (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Aquarius (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Pisces (Feb. 20 to March 20)

ARIES (March 21 to April 20). Your best advantage matters today. Don't ever to above this. It's a positive day today. Rarely, it's connect with someone. Don't ever ask advice, technically speaking, to will going completely.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20). A financial or member of a group will do some. Don't be surprised if you're today. Alternatively, you might meet someone who is a real help. Others will definitely be in a meeting!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20). You need more than you might have to say to any of your best partners with authority figures. Today you might discuss job or to say that others will notice.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22). You want to do something different today. Instead of staying up, you'll be somewhere. Perhaps you have a chance to take a course or study something new.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 23). Your train of whatever you share with someone else because you might suddenly have something or post something today. You enjoy studio qualities to shared property, or something that's your responsibility.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 to Sept. 23). Partners and close friends might demand your attention. Finishing your way about something. Your behavior definitely is unpredictable and relief from. Wow!

LIBRA (Sept. 24 to Oct. 23). Computer crashes, anyone unhappy. Are skills, updated appointments, and workspace and bills tomorrow are just some things you can expect on the job today. Be prepared.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 to Nov. 22). Friends should be extra vigilant today. Success may be yours, but you should be considered prime day for your club draw. Romance might also be a hot today. Try to be mindful.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 to Dec. 21). Your important romance might also be today at home. Or expect an romantic might cancel. Small opportunity might have drawn for personal side special companions.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20). Plan to an exceptional event day! There have been down and allow extra time for everything. Don't be rash in any of your dealings. Expect the unexpected.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19). You might find money today, you might have money. Stand against loss or theft of anything that you own. It's a very unpredictable day for your finances and your possessions.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to March 20). You feel in boldness and very free-exercising today. You might want to do your own things! You definitely don't want others telling you what to do. (Be careful of being impatient and rash today.)

CROSSWORDS PUZZLE

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU

Conceptis SudoKu By Dave Lowe

			1		8			
4			9			2		
7				6		4		5
	5		4					
	6			1			9	
					3		6	
2		7		3				6
	3				2			7
		9	1					

Difficulty level: ★★★★

HOW TO PLAY SUDOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

5	9	8	3	6	7	2	4	1
3	1	2	4	5	9	6	8	7
4	6	7	1	2	8	5	9	3
9	3	1	8	7	5	4	2	6
8	7	5	9	4	2	3	1	6
2	4	6	5	1	3	8	7	9
6	2	4	7	9	1	3	6	8
1	8	9	6	3	4	7	5	2
7	5	3	2	8	6	1	9	4

Actions speak louder than words

By Rina P. Jimlo

WE LIVE IN A WORLD OF noise and chaos. But, the deafening sounds in the minds of troubled teenage characters, Nikko Gloria Santillan, and director, Mike Alexander "Xorex" Mallari, the adorable protagonists of Mike Sandejas' heartwarming Cinemalaya entry, "Diring Bata Kita," go beyond what their ears can perceive.

Mike's bond with her iPod and mp3 players is stronger than her relationship with her emotionally distant parents. They don't know how to get through to her, and she has pretty much given up on them, as well—particularly her dad, who stands her for almost every word that comes out of her mouth. The "noise" of incidental bothers.

MALLARI AND SANDEJAS. Unconditional acceptance and special friendship in "Diring Bata Kita."

Sign language

Kiko isn't much into talking, either—he's deaf. He relies on sign language and rhythmic vibrations to communicate his thoughts and artistry. He too yearns to reconnect with the biological parents who had abandoned him as a child.

Ironically, it's also sound—or the missing effect of silence—that brings the unlikely couple together, after the sudden loss and belligerent Nikko is sent off to a deaf camp in Baguio, run by Sir Buffy Mendoza (Robert Seña), as punishment for getting into a brawl. Among brilliant dead-mates, the Seña unconventional acceptance—and a special friendship with Kiko, who makes her realize how much worse it is to reach out to people when you "listen" with your hears.

Elements

Director Sandejas deftly demonstrates the destructive effects that result when communication lines break down—between parents and their children, and among friends and lovers. Inarticulateness, he doesn't use a lot of dialogue—instead, he relies with different elements of sound and music to convey exchanges of thoughts, arguments, conflicting emotions—even humor, which is never done for effect. As a result, scenes play out organically, making them easier to absorb and comprehend. And, he doesn't allow the intense moments to drown in crying sentimentality.

One only quibble: The pro. duction's decision to give its protagonists the requisite happy ending, which sometimes makes the film feel more like a fairy tale than a modern story anchored in reality.

Mallari and Sandejas don't look like they're from the same age group, but their chemistry not only connects that makes the bond that develops between their characters ring true. The pretty Sandejas inhabits her bad-girl persona with truth and confidence, and Mallari both shines and smolders as Kiko. Zoe makes herself even more endearing in scenes where she finally allows Mike to loosen up and show snippets of her vulnerability.

Confrontation scene

Mallari's powerful confrontation scene with Sofia, which Kiko finds out about Dr. Buffy's plan to quit his job and move to New York, is nothing short of outstanding, because it displayed both characters' passion, commitment and frustrations—with his mute words spoken between them. Actions speak louder than words, indeed.

Patience is a virtude and other boob-tube booboos

By Hector U. Sere

HOST: WHAT IS YOUR goal for this year in terms of your health?

Guest: In terms of my health? Well, for one thing, I want to be healthy in a good way!

(Uh, that sounds nice, but what in the world does it mean?)

* * *

Host: What gift would you give to a special friend who is going abroad for a trip to Egypt?

Guest: Well, a really big bag for containing every possible!

(Including the Sphinx?)

Lesson

Host: What lesson can we learn from the release of Joseph Ejercito Estrada after so many months in captivity?

Guest: For one thing, what I really believe in, that patience is a virtude!

(One man's virtue is another man's vexation!)

* * *

Host: What is your content all about? What viewers are you looking for?

Guest: Uh, as many...singing, dancing and other performers.

(Congratulations, you've just nailed a new word!)

* * *

Host: Tell us more about the character you're playing in your new drama.

Guest: Aw, stupid ojos. Bang bumo ajang tommy si Johnson.

(Highlights, waging multicast!)

* * *

Host: How important is it for us to relax these days?

Guest: Uh, so important, because of the faster ups and downs of life.

Host: So, what works for you?

Guest: For one thing, I don't watch newsroom programs, because of the noises of the news.

(Ah, so...)

Very important

Host: In discussing new stars, does the looks very im. portant to the casting?

(Don't answer that... please!)

* * *

Host: Why do you think talents of show biz personalities is so popular?

Guest: He's popular because he's very in appropriate...that's why many bobuels to him.

(Ginoong Ano?)

* * *

Host: Any final words to our viewers before we say goodbye?

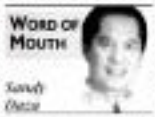
Guest: I just like to thanks everybody!

(How so...)

Foodie haven in Chinatown

I DIDN'T MIND ARRIVING early for a lunch meeting in Chinatown. I love exploring the streets of Binondo. I visited Ilee Tin Grocery, which was where I used to buy different kinds of shrimps—balao, sugpo and now, salty and sun- wrapped, etc. I also loved the steps of dried dumpling pork.

The 45 minutes I had to kill weren't enough time to explore this foodie haven. There were items I had not seen since I was a kid. I saw the comfort snack of many: Lime Label, canned, spicy and chewy beef. Delicious! There were squash seeds and salty baking polvoron, six kinds of spam: cheese, bacon, black pepper, spicy, regular and lite; and the superb dried pork liver.



WORD OF MOUTH

Xandy Ocera

Bangkok salads, unlike the local pork tape, wasn't oily.

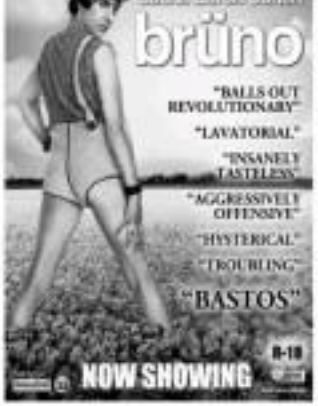
Treats

Other iconic Ilona special lite for those on a diet: Vienna sausage, chicken version; Bangkok sausages, chewy taro and mangosteen-flavored candies, chewy and spicy squid, and crunchy and spicy tofu.

In the canned section: Try the chocolate, the pickled pork with hazelnut dreams, which is delicious with pilpiog hot sauce. Also worth a try: Spare ribs and Chinese luncheon meat, perfect with fried rice and egg. At the back were instant Chinese and Thai stoves, cooking wines, noodles, instant noodles and a wide variety of local and imported candies from Korea, Japan, Malaysia and Thailand.

They also offer freshly cooked food. Try the XO sauce with the mini-spicy shredded scallops. The verdict: Ilee Tin Grocery is an ITH. Duggin st., Binondo. Call 241-3455. Happy eating!

E-mail xandyocera@yahoo.com



Overacting now the norm on TV dramas

GONZALES. Solitary bright light of the new series, "Katorse."

sprocuracular moments?

Well, we should complain. Aside from limiting our television viewing choices, quite a number of the primetime series have practically made bread- and dowerright bad acting the norm on the fourth rated three days.

Evidence

You see the evidence of this lowering of dimple standards all over the place. Marian Rivera passes success as Darna on her new top-rater, but as the superheroine's alter-ego, Narda, the actress like both, especially in the many crying scenes.

Or "Dyesebel," Jake Cuenca also overacts a storm, and female lead, Kim Chiu, is too young and raw to do justice to her plum role. Why was it given to her in the first place? Because she's popular. Unfortunately, the star never the given is too complex for her to delightfully and even adequately fill, so the poor viewer is left looking the bag.

On "Kambal Sa," Carla Abellana looks too mature for her ingenue lead role, while leading man, Geoff Eigenmann, is too young to be believable as his character who has everything character. He speaking "style" is also less than natural.

Child star

On "May Bukas Pa," Albert Martinez "seduces" his villainous role over the plate, and in general, overacting is the disorderly name on the show. Child star Zaijan Jaramillo, it is refreshing to

JARAMILLA. Too "noisy" for his tender years.

ception to the rule, but the dialogue he's made to utter is too "noisy" for his young character.

What's going on here? It could be that too many lead roles are being given to confusion teen or young-adult actors, who are then forced to come up with ways that—up-patronage to keep their shows "existing." Shots they're too young and raw, they have little choice "copied" to come from, so their portrayals quickly turn pat and predictable.

Unfortunately, the low level of TV acting has also completely affected the performances of more mature players, as well...even veterans who are regarded as the best in the business. Since the characters they're made to play are so melodramatic and over-the-top, they aren't de-mands to redeem them, or their veteran experience is all for naught.

Diminishing returns

Is there any way out of this downward spiral of diminishing artistic returns? More enlightened viewers need to complain if they find substantive performances insufficient, offensive or excessive.

To end on a positive note, we should give kids Gonzales, the young star of "Katorse," for being as believable and focused in her role. We wish we could say the same of her leading men, but she's the one actor/solitary bright light. Would that other young stars could be as credible and empathetic.